UNITED NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1994/50
30 June 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Substantive session of 1994
27 June-29 July 1994
Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

REGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report covers the period from the substantive session of 1993 of the Economic and Social Council to the substantive session of 1994. During the first half of 1994, the five regional commissions held their regular sessions. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) held its fiftieth session in New Delhi from 5 to 13 April; the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) held its forty-ninth session in Geneva from 18 to 26 April; the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) held its twenty-fifth session in Cartagena from 20 to 27 April; the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) held the twenty-ninth session of the Commission and the twentieth meeting of the Conference of Ministers in Addis Ababa from 2 to 5 May and the 15th meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole from 26 to 30 April; and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held its seventeenth session from 29 to 31 May.

Information on major economic and social developments within the regions has been made available to the Council in the summaries of the surveys of the five regions (see "Summary of the survey of economic conditions in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe, 1993-1994" (E/1994/51), "Summary of the survey of economic and social conditions in Asia and the Pacific, 1993" (E/1994/52), "Summary of the survey of economic conditions in the regions of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1993" (E/1994/53), "Summary of the survey of economic and social conditions in Africa, 1992-1993" (E/1994/54), "Summary of the survey of economic and social developments in the region of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, 1993" (E/1994/55)).

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* E/1994/100.

The present report contains five sections: section I.A deals with issues calling for action by the Economic and Social Council and section I.B with issues brought to its attention; section II highlights the work of the regional commissions; section III covers meetings of the executive secretaries of the regional commissions held during the year, as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 1823 (XVII) and the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1817 (LV); section IV deals with the impact of international migration in countries of destination and countries of origin, which relates to interregional cooperation in social development and is a subject of common interest to all regions, in response to Council resolution 1982/174; and section V summarizes the reviews by the regional commissions of the relevant provisions of chapter 38 of Agenda 21 and their plans to implement Agenda 21, as requested by the Council in decision 1993/213.

The annual reports of the five regional commissions will provide further background information on the matters dealt with in the present report; the report of ESCAP on its fiftieth session will be issued as Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 16 (E/1994/36); the report of ECE on its forty-ninth session as ibid., Supplement No. 17 (E/1994/37); the report of ECLAC on its twenty-fifth session as ibid., Supplement No. 18 (E/1994/38); the report of ESCWA on its seventeenth session as ibid., Supplement No. 19 (E/1994/39); and the report of ECA on the twenty-ninth session of the Commission and the twentieth meeting of the Conference of Ministers as ibid., Supplement No. 20 (E/1994/40).

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I. MATTERS CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OR BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION

A. Matters calling for action by the Council

1. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

1. At its 758th meeting, the Commission approved the following draft resolution for action by the Council:

DRAFT RESOLUTION

Admission of Armenia as a member of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Council,

1. Approves the recommendation of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific that Armenia be included within the geographical scope of the Commission and be admitted as a member of the Commission;

2. Decides to amend paragraphs 2 and 3 of the terms of reference of the Commission accordingly.

2. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

2. At its twenty-fifth session, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean received an invitation from the Government of Costa Rica to hold its twenty-sixth session at San José in 1996. On 27 April 1994, the Commission adopted resolution 551 (XXV), in which it accepted that invitation and recommended to the Economic and Social Council that it approve the convening of the twenty-sixth session of the Commission in San José, Costa Rica in 1996.

3. Economic Commission for Africa

3. At the twenty-ninth session of the Commission and twentieth meeting of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for economic and social development and planning, held in Addis Ababa from 2 to 5 May 1994, the Conference of Ministers approved the following draft resolutions and recommendation for action by the Council:

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DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Effective implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s [1]

The Economic and Social Council,

Bearing in mind the memorandum of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990, [2]

Recalling General Assembly resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991, the annex to which contains the assessment of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990 and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s,

Recognizing that while during the period of the Programme of Action, African countries managed to fulfil many of their undertakings, the donor community did not make available the resources which they had promised,

Noting that the first two years of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s have been beset by inadequate resources from the international donor community,

Mindful of the fact that Africa's social and economic development is primarily the responsibility of the Governments and people of Africa, in concert with the international community, which has accepted the principle of shared responsibility and full partnership with Africa,

Bearing in mind the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, [3] the need for and feasibility of the establishment of a diversification fund for Africa's commodities [4] and financial resource flows to Africa [5] submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session,

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[1] Resolution 770 (XXIX) of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa.

[2] A/46/280, annex.

[3] A/48/334.

[4] A/48/335, annex, and Add.1 and 2.

[5] A/48/336 and Corr.1.

Taking into consideration the reports of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa on the implementation of the New Agenda [6] and on programme evaluation in the Commission [7] and the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth evaluation of programme 45 of the medium-term plan for the period 1994-1997, [8]

Taking note of General Assembly resolution 48/214 of 23 December 1993, in which the Assembly reaffirmed the expectations in the New Agenda and the priority attached to it,

1. _Notes with appreciation_ the sustained efforts of the Secretary-General to ensure that the social and economic development of Africa remains on the agenda of the international community throughout the 1990s;

2. _Recognizes_ the commitment of the Governments of Africa to the long-term sustainable socio-economic development and growth of the region through the successful implementation of the policies and priorities of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s;

3. _Commends_ the Governments of Africa for their demonstrated commitment to promoting economic development by their adoption of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community, [9] whose objectives are consistent with those of the New Agenda;

4. _Recognizes_ the importance of the regional dimension in the social and economic development of Africa and the potential contributions of the New Agenda in fostering it;

5. _Affirms_ the need to strengthen collaboration between the Organization of African Unity, the African Development Bank and the Economic Commission for Africa in undertaking actions to promote the long-term socio-economic development of the region;

6. _Notes with appreciation_ the goodwill of the Government of Japan in convening the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, held on 5 and 6 October 1993, and the Declaration adopted at that Conference;

7. _Urges_ all the Governments of Africa to continue to take appropriate policy measures and actions for the sustained socio-economic development and growth of the region;

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[6] E/ECA/CM.20/3.

[7] E/ECA/CM.20/27.

[8] E/AC.51/1994/4 and Corr.1. The report was considered by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at the first part of its thirty-fourth session (see A/49/16).

[9] A/46/651, annex.

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8. Renews its call to Africa's development partners, including the organizations and programmes of the United Nations system, and the international community at large, to fulfil their commitments to support Africa's efforts, particularly in relation to resource flows to the region, the enhancement of Africa's access to markets and debt relief;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to consider favourably, in the framework of the restructuring of the Secretariat, possible institutional arrangements, including additional resources and other means, to significantly strengthen the capacity of the Economic Commission for Africa to fulfil its coordination, follow-up and monitoring role in the implementation of the New Agenda;

10. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to monitor the implementation of the New Agenda closely, especially those aspects related to the mobilization of resources, and to report thereon to the Conference of Ministers of the Commission at its twenty-first meeting.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Development and strengthening of the programme activities of the Economic Commission for Africa in the field of natural resources, energy and marine affairs [10]

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 32/197 of 20 December 1977, 33/202 of 29 January 1979, 44/211 of 22 December 1989, 46/235 of 13 April 1992, 47/199 of 22 December 1992 and 48/162 of 20 December 1993, Economic and Social Council resolutions 1987/10 of 26 May 1987 and 1989/6 of 22 May 1989 and resolutions 572 (XXI) of 19 April 1986 [11] and 602 (XXII) of 24 April 1987 [12] of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Endorsing the findings and conclusions of the self-evaluation of the Economic Commission for Africa on the subprogrammes concerned with natural resources, energy and marine affairs carried out during the biennium 1992-1993, [13]

Mindful of the regrouping of those subprogrammes in the revised medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 and the programme budget for the biennium

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[10] Resolution 776 (XXIX) of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa.

[11] Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1986, Supplement No. 12 (E/1986/33).

[12] Ibid., 1987, Supplement No. 16 (E/1987/36).

[13] E/ECA/CM.20/27.

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1994-1995 into a single subprogramme aimed at enhancing the interrelationships between the natural resource, energy and marine affairs sectors to ensure greater programme impact,

Aware of the enhanced significance and strategic importance of the present natural resources subprogramme for sustaining the long-term objectives of the medium-term plan, in particular with regard to economic cooperation in the region and the integration of Africa in the context of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, 9/ Agenda 21, 14/ adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s,

Recognizing the urgency involved in strengthening both the substantive and the operational capacity of the subprogramme in order to enhance its intended impact within the region,

Noting with concern the continued stagnation of available resources, both regular and extrabudgetary, required to carry out activities in support of regional policies, programmes and projects in order to strengthen the capacities and capabilities of the countries of Africa to explore, exploit and develop their natural resources fully,

Highly appreciative of the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General in the context of decentralization to strengthen the activities of the Economic Commission for Africa in the area of natural resource development, especially in the fields of mineral resources, water resources, cartography and remote sensing, energy and marine affairs,

Convinced that the current process of decentralizing the regular programme activities needs to be supported by a corresponding decentralization of extrabudgetary resources to complement and maximize existing regional capacities,

1. Appeals to all partners in the operational activities for the development of Africa to give due consideration to the priorities assigned to the development of natural resources within the programme of work of the Economic Commission for Africa with a view to funding related project activities;

2. Calls upon member States to facilitate the implementation of the activities of the Commission in natural resource development through effective national institutional mechanisms, in particular with regard to the follow-up of the recommendations of the Commission emanating from the self-evaluation of the subprogrammes concerning marine affairs, natural resources and energy;

14/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

3. Calls upon the Secretary-General, within the context of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, to ensure the effective decentralization of relevant global programmes and activities to the Economic Commission for Africa;

4. Requests that an in-depth evaluation of the subprogramme of the Commission on natural resources and energy development be undertaken during the biennium 1994-1995;

5. Also requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to report on the implementation of the present resolution at the twenty-first meeting of the Conference of Ministers of the Commission.

DRAFT RESOLUTION III

Enhancing the capacity of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres of the Economic Commission for Africa [15]

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling resolution 311 (XIII) of 1 March 1977 of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa, [16] establishing the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres of the Economic Commission for Africa;

Recalling also resolution 702 (XXV) of 19 May 1990 [17] and the pertinent provisions of resolution 726 (XXVII) of 22 April 1992 [18] of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Noting with satisfaction the allocation by the General Assembly, through its resolution 46/185 C of 20 December 1991, of five additional Professional posts in the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres,

Noting with appreciation that most of the additional resources made available to the Economic Commission for Africa under the United Nations regular programme of technical cooperation in 1994-1995 have been redeployed to the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres with a view to strengthening their capacity to provide advisory services within the subregions,

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[15] Resolution 777 (XXIX) of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa.

[16] Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 7 (E/5941), vol. I, part III.

[17] Ibid., 1990, Supplement No. 13 (E/1990/42).

[18] Ibid., 1992, Supplement No. 13 (E/1993/33).

Considering, however, that critical areas remained uncovered by the expertise currently available in the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres and require additional resources on a sustained basis which cannot be met through the regional advisory services programme of the Commission;

Noting with satisfaction the continuous material support of member countries in providing the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres, inter alia, with office premises free of charge and seconding national experts to the Centres on a temporary basis,

Taking note of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-first session on the evaluation of the development issues and policies programme: Economic Commission for Africa", 19/ and more specifically of the sections of the report devoted to the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres,

Recalling that the budgets for the Centres for the biennium 1994-1995 were approved with due regard to current budget constraints in the United Nations and the pressing priorities of member States and their intergovernmental organizations,

Reaffirming the validity in the short, medium and long term of the mandate of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres as spelt out in the annex to resolution 702 (XXV) of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa and noting the activities carried out by the Centres towards the rationalization and harmonization of subregional economic groupings, as well as the substantive support to the latter in the formulation and implementation of their multisectoral programmes,

1. Expresses its appreciation to the General Assembly for the measures already taken to strengthen the capacity of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres to respond adequately to the needs of their member States and their intergovernmental organizations;

2. Supports the efforts being made by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to provide the Centres with the required critical staff and non-staff resources to enhance their effectiveness;

3. Calls upon the General Assembly, within the framework of future budget provisions, to supplement efforts made by the Economic Commission for Africa and member States in order to increase the human and financial resources of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres.

19/ E/AC.51/1994/5. The report was considered by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at the first part of its thirty-fourth session (see A/49/16).

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DRAFT RESOLUTION IV

Implementation of the programme for the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa [20]

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 47/177 of 22 December 1992, by which the Assembly adopted the programme for the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa and called upon the African countries and the international community to take certain concrete steps to ensure the full and successful implementation of the Decade,

Recalling further resolution GC.4/Res.8 of 22 November 1991 of the General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization on the Second Decade, in which the General Conference requested the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to provide greater support to African countries and their subregional organizations for the implementation of their national and subregional programmes for the Second Decade,

Mindful of resolution 739 (XXVII) of 22 April 1992 of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa, [18] in which the Conference of Ministers requested the General Assembly to provide the Commission with adequate resources to enable it to assist the African countries and subregional organizations in implementing the national and subregional programmes for the Second Decade,

Conscious of the crucial role that can be played by the private sector, local entrepreneurship and women in the accelerated development of industrialized countries and newly industrialized countries,

Reaffirming the primary responsibility of the African countries in the implementation of the programme for the Second Decade and the need for a substantial flow of technical and financial resources from the international community towards the industrialization of Africa and, in particular, the implementation of the programme for the Decade,

Also reaffirming the need to coordinate and harmonize the activities of the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa and of the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa,

1. Calls upon all African countries to take concrete policy, institutional and other measures to ensure full implementation of their national and subregional programmes for the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa, including the establishment of an enabling environment conducive to the development of the private sector and the attraction of substantial financial

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[20] Resolution 780 (XXIX) of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa.

and technical resources for investment in the priority areas of the programme for the Second Decade;

2. Calls upon Africa's development partners and development finance institutions, in particular, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the Islamic Development Bank, the Arab Bank for the Economic Development of Africa and African subregional banks and funds, to allocate substantial resources for the implementation of the programme for the Second Decade at the national and subregional levels;

3. Calls upon the African countries which have not yet done so to establish national coordinating committees for the Second Decade and to take full account of the priorities of the Second Decade in policy and programme formulation for the industrial sector, ensuring that structural adjustment programmes do not adversely affect the implementation of the programme for the Second Decade;

4. Requests the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to take concrete steps to ensure that the programme for the Second Decade and, in particular, the Coordination Unit for the Industrial Development Decade for Africa, is provided with substantially increased human and financial resources to enable it to support more effectively the implementation of the 50 national and four subregional programmes for the Second Decade;

5. Endorses the plan of action for the coordination of the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa and the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, taking into account the recommendations of the Conference of African Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning; 21/

6. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to undertake the concrete actions required to harmonize the activities of the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa and of the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa according to the plan of action, in consultation with the Organization of African Unity, the African Development Bank and other relevant organizations;

7. Also requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to accord high priority to the development of the private sector, the participation of women and the utilization of African consultants in their activities related to the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa;

8. Further requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, to take concrete steps for the promotion of the Second Industrial

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21/ See E/ECA/CM.19/14 and Add.1.

Development Decade for Africa at the international level, the mobilization of financial and technical resources for the Decade and the implementation of Agenda 21, 14/ adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and to review the implications of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and the fundamental changes at the international level for the industrialization efforts of the African countries;

9. Requests the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to ensure that every opportunity is taken to mobilize financial resources for the programme for the Second Decade;

10. Requests the General Assembly to allocate increased resources to the Economic Commission for Africa to enable it to support the African countries in their efforts to implement the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa more effectively, and especially the activities of the Committee of 10 of the Commission, at the regional, subregional and national levels;

11. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to report jointly on the implementation of the present resolution to the Conference of Ministers of the Commission at its twenty-first meeting.

DRAFT RESOLUTION V

Strengthening information systems for Africa's recovery and sustainable development 22/

The Economic and Social Council,

Convinced that information support is vital to Africa's recovery and sustainable development,

Concerned by the underdeveloped information and documentation sector in many African countries and the inadequate financial and material resources available for its growth,

Welcoming General Assembly decision 48/453 of 21 December 1993, in which it agreed to ensure the provision of adequate staffing and resources to permit the delivery of activities in the subprogramme of the Economic Commission for Africa on information systems development, beginning with the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995,

Recalling its resolutions 1992/51 of 31 July 1992, in which it requested the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to ensure that its activities were grounded in sound data and information systems, and 1993/67 of 30 July 1993 concerning the subprogramme of the Commission on statistical and information systems development,

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22/ Resolution 789 (XXIX) of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa

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Recalling also resolutions 716 (XXVI) of 12 May 1991 23/ and 766 (XXVIII) of 4 May 1993 24/ of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Appreciative of the continuing support given by the International Development Research Centre, as well as of the new support from the Government of the Netherlands and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, to the activities of the Pan-African Development Information System to strengthen the information capabilities of member States,

Appreciative also of the approval by the Council of Ministers of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of the project on information technology for Africa for further consideration by the European Union in the framework of the Fourth Lomé IV Convention,

Bearing in mind the need to strengthen the subregional development information centres of the Commission as information support for subregional economic cooperation and integration,

Noting with satisfaction the efforts being made by the development information system of the Commission in the delivery of technical assistance to member States and the large number of requests pending in this area,

Also noting with satisfaction the full incorporation of the activities on information system development into the programme budget of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Noting with concern, however, that the Commission has had regular budget activities in this area since 1984 without resources being provided for them,

Aware of the decreasing availability of extrabudgetary resources for the implementation and utilization of development information systems and technology,

Noting with grave concern the precarious financial situation concerning the activities of the Economic Commission for Africa in this area, which are designed to meet the serious needs of member States, and noting the urgent need to end reliance on extrabudgetary sources of funding;

1. Appeals to member States to recognize the vital importance of developing their information sector by:

(a) Adopting national information and informatics policies;

(b) Providing sufficient resources in the national budget for essential growth in this area;

23/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1991, Supplement No. 16 (E/1991/37).

24/ Ibid., 1993, Supplement No. 18 (E/1993/38).

2. Urges member States to approve the utilization of new technology for electronic communication in order to permit Africa full access to the global information highway;

3. Also urges member States to formulate their needs for technical assistance in information systems development by:

(a) Giving priority to information systems development in the use of their United Nations Development Programme country indicative planning figures, utilizing the Technical Support Services mechanism where applicable;

(b) Considering development information activities in their pledges to the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development;

(c) Using, where appropriate, the financial provisions under the Fourth Lomé Convention for this purpose;

4. Urgently appeals to the European Union to consider favourably the Pan-African Development Information System project approved by the Council of Ministers of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group and submitted to it for funding;

5. Calls upon the donor community to support both national initiatives and the activities of the Economic Commission for Africa to strengthen development information capabilities in Africa;

6. Approves the outline of the work programme for 1995-1996 in information systems development, while urging the Economic Commission for Africa to continue its leadership role in the area of information systems and sciences, information technology and telematics in order to support Africa's efforts to achieve sustainable development;

7. Encourages the Economic Commission for Africa, through its information systems development activities, to facilitate intra-African information exchange in support of regional economic integration by developing norms and standards, in collaboration with other relevant technical organizations, for information compatibility and by promoting their use;

8. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to allocate additional resources to the subprogramme of the Commission on statistical and information systems development, in accordance with General Assembly decision 48/453;

9. Also requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to seek additional resources through voluntary contributions for the subregional development information centres of the Commission in the framework of the subprogramme on statistical and information systems development;

10. Requests the General Assembly, within the spirit of its decision 48/453 and in view of the importance of development information systems for the development of Africa to authorize the creation of three Professional posts at the P-3, P-4 and P-5 levels and four local level posts to permit the delivery of

the activities in the subprogramme of the Economic Commission for Africa on statistical and information systems development, beginning with the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

Readmission of democratic South Africa as a member of the Economic Commission for Africa [25]

4. In section IV of its resolution 974 D (XXXVI) of 30 July 1965, the Economic and Social Council decided that the Republic of South Africa should not take part in the work of the Economic Commission for Africa until the Council, on the recommendation of the Commission, should find that conditions for constructive cooperation had been restored by a change in its racial policy.

5. In paragraph 10 of Declaration 1 (XXIX), adopted by the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa on 5 May 1994, [26] the Conference of Ministers requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to submit a report to the Council, in conformity with Council resolution 974 D (XXXVI), to recommend the readmission of democratic South Africa to the Commission.

6. In making that request, the Conference of Ministers recognized the radical changes that had taken place in South Africa since February 1990, particularly the dismantling of the system of apartheid, the adoption of a democratic constitution and the holding of the first non-racial general elections.

7. The Conference of Ministers is therefore convinced that conditions for constructive cooperation with South Africa have now been restored. Accordingly, the Conference of Ministers, recommends that the Council readmit South Africa as a member of the Economic Commission for Africa.

4. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

8. At its fifth plenary meeting, on 31 May 1994, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia approved the following draft resolutions for action by the Economic and Social Council:

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[25] Declaration 1 (XXIX) of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa.

[26] To be issued in Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 20 (E/1994/40).

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Frequency of the sessions of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Technical Committee [27]

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling resolution 158 (XIV) of 5 April 1987 of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, [28] in which the Commission decided to hold its sessions on a biennial basis,

Recalling also resolution 178 (XVI) of 2 September 1992 of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, [29] in which the Commission decided that the Technical Committee would meet during the years when no Commission session was held,

Convinced of the benefit of maintaining continuity in the sessions of the Commission and the meetings of the Technical Committee and of their being held consecutively in the same year, as well as of the need to hold sessions of the Commission in odd years to coincide with the consideration of the programme budget by the General Assembly and with the monitoring of progress achieved in the work programmes of the Secretariat,

Taking into consideration the terms of reference of the Technical Committee, as set out in Council resolution 1982/64 of 30 July 1982 on the establishment of a Standing Committee for the Programme of the Commission and in its resolution 1984/80 of 27 July 1984 on the general policy-making structure of the Commission,

1. Decides that the meetings of the Technical Committee of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia will henceforth be linked with the sessions of the Commission, in accordance with earlier practice, and that the Technical Committee will hold its meeting shortly before each session of the Commission;

2. Decides also that the Commission will hold its sessions in odd years, starting in 1995, to coincide with the consideration of the programme budget by the General Assembly and with the monitoring of progress achieved in the work programmes of the Secretariat;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to submit a detailed report on the activities, plans and

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[27] Resolution 196 (XVII) of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

[28] Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1987, Supplement No. 15 (E/1987/35).

[29] Ibid., 1992, Supplement No. 14 (E/1992/34).

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programmes of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council in those years when the Commission does not hold a session.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Permanent headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia [30]

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 1993/3 of 2 February 1993 and resolution 192 (XVI) of 2 September 1992 of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, [29]

Taking into account the report of the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia [31] submitted to the Commission at its seventeenth session pursuant to Commission resolution 192 (XVI), as well as the debate conducted and procedures followed in the closed meeting of the heads of delegations for the selection of a host country for the permanent headquarters of the Commission,

1. Expresses deep appreciation to the Government of Iraq for serving as the host country for the headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in past years;

2. Also expresses deep appreciation to the Government of Jordan for its support and cooperation in providing facilities and assistance for the temporary headquarters of the Commission;

3. Expresses deep appreciation to the Government of Jordan and the Government of Qatar for their offers to serve as host countries for the permanent headquarters of the Commission;

4. Decides, having considered and subsequently accepted the offer of the Government of Lebanon, to recommend that the permanent headquarters of the Commission be relocated to Beirut;

5. Requests the Secretary-General:

(a) To approach the Government of Lebanon, as soon as the appropriate legal action has been taken by the United Nations with regard to paragraph 4 above, in order to arrive at a common understanding on all issues and commitments relating to the relocation of the permanent headquarters of the Commission, to conclude an agreement concerning the headquarters and to agree upon a suitable timetable and the necessary arrangements for the relocation of the permanent headquarters to Beirut in such a way as to ensure that the requirements for the proper functioning of the Commission are met;

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[30] Resolution 197 (XVII) of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

[31] E/ESCWA/17/14.

(b) To take all steps necessary to effect the transfer of the permanent headquarters of the Commission in accordance with the present resolution;

6. Requests the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its eighteenth session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

DRAFT RESOLUTION III

Establishment of a committee on social development within the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia [32]

The Economic and Social Council,

Referring to resolutions 182 (XVI) on the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Decade for Western Asia (1994-2003), 186 (XVI) on preparations for the International Year of the Family, 1994, 187 (XVI) on the World Summit for Social Development, 188 (XVI) on preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace and 189 (XVI) on the Arab Population Conference, 1993, which were adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on 2 September 1992, [29]

Cognizant of the importance of coordinating social development activities at the regional level and related issues in the areas of human development, population, human settlements and local communities, the family and the advancement of women in Western Asia, in accordance with the conditions, cultural realities and social structure of the States of the region and their economic and social development needs,

Conscious of the importance of increasing the participation of the competent authorities of the States members of the Commission in the planning and development of the programmes of the secretariat of the Commission in the social field and the definition of priorities for social plans and programmes,

Inspired by the steps taken by other regional commissions for the establishment of specialized committees on social development to assume responsibility for coordinating action in their regions,

Cognizant of the need to strengthen coordination and integration between the Commission and Arab regional organizations on the social development policies, programmes and activities of organizations with a view to satisfying the needs of the member States and promoting the comprehensive development of the States of the region,

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[32] Resolution 198 (XVII) of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

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1. Decides to establish a Committee on Social Development within the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, made up of representatives of the States member of the Commission, which will assume the following tasks:

(a) Participation in the establishment and formulation of priorities for the programme of work and medium-term plan in social development fields;

(b) Monitoring of the progress achieved in social programmes and activities in the States members of the Commission and preparation of the necessary recommendations for strengthening the social development process in those States;

(c) Follow-up of international and regional conferences, participation of member States in them and coordination of regional efforts relating to the implementation of resolutions and recommendations;

(d) Definition of focal points to coordinate various social activities together with the secretariat of the Commission and to monitor their execution;

2. Also decides that, starting in 1995, the Committee on Social Development will hold its meetings every two years;

3. Invites the Executive Secretary of the Commission to follow up the implementation of the present resolution and report thereon to the Commission at its eighteenth session.

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

1. Economic Commission for Europe

Decision A (49). The work of the Commission as a whole and its future activities

9. The Commission reaffirmed its determination to continue to implement decisions O (45) and P (45). It requested its subsidiary bodies to take into account the provisions of the relevant documents of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), calling for multilateral implementation within the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and invited them to contribute to the practical follow-up of the second CSCE Economic Forum (Prague, March 1994). It also requested the Executive Secretary to contribute, if invited, to the CSCE Review Conference in Budapest in October 1994. The Commission approved its programme of work for 1994-1995 and endorsed, in principle, subject to review at its fiftieth session, its programme of work for 1994-1998. It requested the Executive Secretary to bring the work of the Commission to the attention of the Secretary-General to assist him in the preparation of the reports which he was required to submit to the Assembly, notably on questions relating to international cooperation to alleviate the consequences of war in Croatia and to facilitate its recovery.

10. The Commission urged the Secretary-General in restructuring the Secretariat to consider positively the possibility of future strengthening of the Commission

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by transferring to it, in addition to the 10 posts for regional advisers, adequate human and financial resources, taking into account the areas of competence of ECE. It also requested the Executive Secretary to take urgent action to fill the vacant professional posts and to bring to the attention of the Secretary-General the need to provide the resources necessary to maintain the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission.

Decision B (49). Diversification of forms and methods of the Commission's activities designed to assist countries of the region in transition to a market economy and their integration with the European and global economy

11. Concerned by the persisting difficulties encountered by the countries in transition and aware of the need to enhance cooperation in the ECE region with a view to achieving dynamic economic development, in particular in the countries in transition, the Commission confirmed the importance of continuing the programme of workshops and seminars. It recommended that Governments undertake a constructive exchange of their experiences in moving to market-oriented economies and requested the Executive Secretary to provide the necessary expertise and assistance to that kind of activity and to coordinate such activities with relevant international organizations.

12. It reaffirmed its conviction as contained in its resolution 1 (1992-S), of the need to ensure, in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/43, that all ECE member States can participate fully and effectively in the work of the Commission, and to that end decided, through the Trust Fund For Assistance to Countries in Transition, to provide financial assistance to the countries in transition for their participation in the ECE programme of workshops and in meetings of ECE subsidiary bodies. It also recommended that ECE be a focal coordinating point in the context of appropriate arrangements to be made within the United Nations Secretariat in response to General Assembly resolution 48/181 with a view to promoting and enhancing mutual cooperation with United Nations global programmes and with international institutions.

Decision C (49). Promoting the expansion of trade for products from the countries in transition in international markets

13. Concerned by still existing constraints to trade among the countries of the ECE region and recognizing that further liberalization and expansion of trade among western countries and economies in transition were essential for the success of the market-oriented reforms in those countries, the Commission urged its member States to examine specific needs of the countries in transition for promoting the expansion of trade, including improvements in market access and in market competitiveness. It requested the Executive Secretary, in consultation with ECE member States, to prepare a study containing recommendations on ways and means of promoting the expansion of trade of the countries in transition. It decided to arrange, during the fiftieth session of the Commission, a

round-table on promoting the expansion of trade of the countries in transition as an important factor of their integration in the European and global economy.

Decision D (49). Economic cooperation in the Mediterranean in the light of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

14. The Commission noted the growing awareness of the need for joint efforts by all Mediterranean countries to strengthen economic, social, cultural and environmental cooperation and in promoting stability and peace in the Mediterranean region in the light of the Final Act of CSCE, the Charter of Paris and the Helsinki Summit Declaration 1992. It called upon the Executive Secretary to continue to undertake action-oriented studies, including specific analysis of existing economic cooperation between ECE Mediterranean countries, to identify effective means of enhancing economic cooperation in the Mediterranean and requested him to continue to cooperate with the Executive Secretaries of the other regional commissions and to pursue his contacts with the other Mediterranean countries which were not members of the Commission. It further requested the Executive Secretaries of ECA and ECE to take an active part in the follow-up to the project on the Europe-Africa permanent link through the Strait of Gibraltar.

Decision E (49). The contribution of the ECE to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

15. The Commission expressed its conviction that the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should meet the efforts of ECE to foster the aim of the United Nations in its region. It decided to include the activities envisaged in the secretariat's note (E/ECE/1289) on the ECE contribution to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995, in the ECE programme of work for 1994-1998. It requested the Executive Secretary to prepare a report on the current contribution of ECE to the global programmes and development of other regions of the world. The annex to the decision contained the "Declaration on the strengthening of the role and functions of the Economic Commission for Europe and on its contribution to the global programmes of the United Nations and to the development of other regions of the world". In the Declaration the Commission recognized the particular role which it plays in the European region as a multilateral forum for European cooperation in economic and related fields and its capacity for an interdisciplinary approach to the ongoing changes in the region. It stressed the need for a more effective distribution of responsibilities between ECE and United Nations Headquarters and global programmes and considered that adequate budgetary and financial provision should be made to enable ECE to implement its mandated programme of work.

Decision F (49). Cooperation in the field of environment and sustainable development

16. Conscious of the importance of sustainable development for the global community and its member States, the Commission stressed the multifaceted nature of sustainable development, as well as the need to maintain a comprehensive view in the Commission's work. As a follow-up to Agenda 21, it decided that a regional conference on transport and the environment should take place in 1996 under the auspices of ECE. It took note of the revised structure of the programme of work of the Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems, henceforth to be named the Committee on Environmental Policy, and endorsed its proposed terms of reference. It requested all relevant principal subsidiary bodies to strengthen their activities in the field of environment and sustainable development and invited the Committee on Environmental Policy to identify problems and bottlenecks in those fields. It endorsed the creation of the Working Group of Senior Governmental Officials to serve as the central coordinating body for the further development of the "Environment for Europe" process. It called again upon all ECE member States and the European Union to ratify, if they had not already done so, the various ECE conventions in the field of protection of the environment.

Decision G (49). Cooperation in the field of transport

17. The Commission underlined the importance of transport questions in regional cooperation, in particular as regards assistance to economies in transition. It expressed its conviction that ECE had a prominent role in regional transport cooperation. It decided that a regional conference on transport and the environment should take place in 1996 under the auspices of ECE and that a Preparatory Committee at expert level should decide on its working modalities and make proposals for the organization and objectives of the Conference, covering also the budgetary aspects. The Commission endorsed the programme and the modalities for the second European Road Safety Week (spring, 1995) and underlined the importance of further development and early completion of joint road and rail infrastructure projects. Member countries were requested to increase their efforts to identify bottlenecks and missing links in international infrastructure networks and to propose solutions in the framework of the relevant ECE agreements. It endorsed the decision of the Inland Transport Committee to develop regulations for combined transport on inland waterways and possibly on coastal shipping and encouraged the Committee to turn them into legally binding instruments. It called upon the Committee to intensify its activities to assist countries in transition in the implementation of economic reforms in all inland transport sectors.

Decision H (49). Metrological assurance of testing

18. The Commission recommended that ECE Governments support the development and implementation of fully harmonized standards, guides and technical regulations promoting methods and means of metrological assurance on the basis of the international documents and recommendations of the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) as well as the standards and guides of the International

Organisation for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). When developing national standards and technical regulations, the bodies concerned should take into account that each accredited testing laboratory must have a set of measurement standards traceable to national or international measurement standards.

Decision I (49). The United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

19. The Commission considered that the Conference would be a central event in the United Nations activities aimed at sustainable development and adequate shelter for all and that it would further the work carried out within the framework of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. It expressed its conviction that the recent experience gained in ECE countries in approaching and resolving human settlements problems, particularly in housing, could be of value to countries in other regions. It decided to convene, within the context of the September 1994 meeting of the Committee on Human Settlements and at an appropriately high level, a regional preparatory meeting for Habitat II, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/180.

Decision J (49). ECE contribution to the preparatory work for the Fourth World Conference on Women

20. The Commission endorsed the main headings of the draft agenda of the High-Level Regional Preparatory Meeting, to be held from 17 to 21 October 1994 in Vienna. It requested the secretariat to continue informal consultations with ECE member States, with particular emphasis on the elaboration of the ECE input to the Platform for Action. It decided to extend the deadline for applications for accreditation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to the High-Level Preparatory Meeting until 1 August 1994 and agreed that action to accredit those NGOs would be taken by the Commission at its meetings in June and September 1994. It noted with appreciation the contributions received for the financing of the Preparatory Meeting and invited ECE member States to continue to consider contributing adequate funding for the Meeting.

2. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

21. The fiftieth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, held in New Delhi at the invitation of the Government of India, concluded on 13 April 1994 on a note of high optimism for the future of the region, as well as with a realistic appreciation of the complex nature of the many problems of development that lay ahead. It sought to provide further impetus to promoting greater cooperation and mutual understanding among its membership, aimed at sustaining and spreading the development momentum that had become increasingly the hallmark of the region.

22. The Commission noted with satisfaction the continued economic dynamism of the ESCAP region, resulting in its emergence as an important engine of growth

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for the international economy. It viewed the prospects for the continuing growth of the region's economies as bright, in the light of the vigorous implementation of policy reforms instituted by most of the countries of the region, rising domestic demand, the increasing trend in intraregional trade, investment and technology flows, the improved outlook for the recovery of the rest of the world economy, and the prospects of a better world trading environment. Although there were noticeable indications of the spread of growth momentum to a larger number of economies, the Commission viewed with concern the fact that many economies of the region did not share the region's overall dynamism and strong growth performance. That included many of the least developed, land-locked and island developing economies, although several of them had shown some improvement in their performance in recent years.

23. The discussions covered a wide range of development issues, such as the amelioration and spread of growth, reduction of disparities, development of infrastructure, promotion of trade, alleviation of poverty and preservation of the environment, and were underpinned by an over-arching desire to address those issues in a spirit of regional cooperation. In that context, the role of ESCAP as a catalytic instrument for sharing experiences, providing guidelines for national policies and strengthening endogenous capacity for sustained development was highlighted.

24. The Commission laid special emphasis on strengthening cooperation between ESCAP and the subregional organizations to facilitate the exchange of experience and to spread growth momentum. It noted that cooperation between and among them should serve to facilitate more effective support to the developing countries of the region so as to enable them to take advantage of the growing potential in intraregional trade, investment and technology transfer.

25. In addition, the Commission strongly encouraged greater cooperation and coordination with agencies and bodies represented in the region, both those belonging to the United Nations system and those outside, for strengthening development efforts.

26. In the same spirit, the Commission also advocated enhanced partnership between Governments, NGOs and the private sector in a variety of areas, including poverty alleviation programmes, ensuring full participation and equality for some 300 million persons with disabilities of the region, and encouraging the development of the disadvantaged economies in transition. Yet, there was widespread recognition that in the emerging world of new development paradigms, in which the accent was clearly on enhancing the role of market forces in economic decisions and greater reliance on the private sector, Governments had a critical role to play in economic development, ranging from direct investment in human resources and physical infrastructure to the provision of a transparent and stable regulatory framework.

27. Environmental degradation, due to rising energy requirements and the excessive pressure on land that had led to its overuse for agricultural production and unsustainable exploitation of forest resources, was another area which received considerable attention from the Commission. It underscored the need for prudent and sensible economic policies with adequate safeguards for environmental protection and planning and the integration of issues of

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sustainable development into decision-making. The guidance given by the Commission for the implementation of Agenda 21 and the holding of the Regional Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development, in 1995, was thus most appropriate. The Ministerial Conference would also benefit from the outcome of the forthcoming Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Development, which would be held at Beijing in September 1994.

28. The Commission adopted a number of important resolutions including the nine summarized below.

29. The Commission unanimously adopted the Delhi Declaration on Strengthening Regional Economic Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific towards the Twenty-first Century. In that Declaration the Commission reaffirmed the common commitment to the goal of sustainable development as well as to the development of the socio-economic infrastructure necessary for sustaining the growth momentum evidenced in the Asia and Pacific region and for effectively addressing the need to attain a better quality of life for the peoples of the region. It acknowledged the growing interdependence between the economies of the region and the shared interest of all in promoting equitable distribution of the fruits of economic and social development for the benefit of all. Aware of the complementarities among economies in the region arising from the diversity of endowment of capital, technological and other resources, and of the importance of intensifying regional cooperation with a view to realizing fully the potential of these resources, the Commission declared that it would intensify further collective efforts for regional cooperation, including inter-subregional cooperation, to ensure that economic growth and social development spread across the Asia and Pacific region for the benefit of all peoples. The imperatives of economic cooperation, especially in trade, investment, technology transfer and tourism would also be accorded high priority. Concerted efforts for the development of physical infrastructure would be launched and recognition accorded to the transport and communication links required to facilitate regional trade and economic cooperation. Capital and technology flows within the region would be promoted to facilitate sustainable development and towards this end, cooperation in the area of human resources development would be strengthened, with special attention to the economic and social development of the least developed, land-locked and island developing countries and the disadvantaged economies in transition. The Executive Secretary was requested to initiate appropriate action to review and recommend measures for further strengthening regional cooperation consistent with the emerging regional identity. Donor Governments and multilateral agencies were requested to provide support to implement the Declaration, and subregional organizations and relevant regional institutions were invited to cooperate with the Executive Secretary in this regard.

30. In its resolution on the status of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, the Commission noted the strong institutional and operational links that the Institute had had during the past 24 years with the various bodies of the Commission and with the members and associate members and expressed its confidence that the Institute would continue to function on a sound financial basis exclusively through voluntary contributions. To provide the Institute with a durable institutional framework, the Commission recommended that the Institute should continue its operations as a regional institution and should

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acquire the legal status of one of the Commission's subsidiary bodies as of 1 April 1995 and that a Statute be considered at the fifty-first session of the Commission. In that context, the Executive Secretary was requested to take the necessary action in consultation with the Government of Japan, which had generously offered to continue to serve as the host country of the Institute, and with the United Nations Development Programme.

31. In its resolution on participatory human settlements development, realizing that human settlements policies must be broad-based and form an integral part of development programmes and macroeconomic policies and that these programmes and policies have deep social implications, the Commission adopted the Regional Action Plan on Urbanization endorsed by the Ministerial Conference on Urbanization in Asia and the Pacific, held at Bangkok on 1 and 2 November 1993, as a blueprint for urban development and improved urban management. Members and associate members were urged to encourage the active involvement of non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations in the policy and strategy formulation process and in the implementation of shelter projects. They were also urged to establish national and local-level urban forums composed of representatives from the relevant departments and different levels of government, the private sector, community associations and non-governmental organizations to institutionalize the process of cooperation and collaboration in the formulation of urban action plans. All actors concerned with human settlements issues were called upon to involve themselves in the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), to be convened in Istanbul in 1996. The Commission also requested members and associate members to explore the possibility of including the subject of human settlements as part of their respective educational curricula. It also expressed support for increased responsibilities to local governments in infrastructure construction and maintenance. The Executive Secretary was requested to monitor and review the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on a biennial basis.

32. In its resolution on regional preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Commission recognized with appreciation all the preparatory activities undertaken by the Government of Indonesia for hosting the Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development in Jakarta in June 1994 and those activities undertaken by the Government of China for hosting the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995. It called upon members and associate members to undertake the necessary review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and prepare country reports which would serve as input for the regional and global review and appraisal of the strategies. The Executive Secretary was requested to ensure that the draft plan of action, the most important basic document for the Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development, was concise but comprehensive, identified critical areas of concern to most countries in the region and listed measurable goals and strategic objectives to be achieved as well as actions to be taken by Governments, non-governmental organizations, and regional and international organizations and institutions, taking into account views and concerns expressed in the relevant forums of the United Nations and other non-governmental bodies in the region. It urged representation at the highest levels at both the Meeting of Senior Officials on Women in Development and the Ministerial

Conference. The Executive Secretary was requested to present the regional action proposals emanating from the Ministerial Conference as the main Asia and Pacific regional input into the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference was requested to provide the necessary substantive assistance for the success of the Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference as a preparatory meeting for the Fourth World Conference.

33. In its resolution on infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific, the Commission welcomed the draft action plan on infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific and reiterated the members' and associate members' commitment and determination to strengthen their infrastructure and to cooperate in improving subregional and regional infrastructure. The Steering Group of the Committee for Regional Economic Cooperation as well as the Committee itself were requested to examine in detail the draft action plan and recommend priorities and modalities for its implementation. After their examinations, the draft plan would be submitted to the Commission at its fifty-first session for consideration and adoption as the New Delhi Action Plan on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific.

34. In its resolution on regional preparations for the World Summit for Social Development, the Commission noted with concern the continued prevalence of poverty in the Asia and Pacific region, resulting in particularly adverse conditions for such disadvantaged groups as women, children, disabled persons, ageing persons, minority groups, migrants and refugees. Bearing in mind the Social Development Strategy for the ESCAP Region towards the Year 2000 and Beyond, and the need for comprehensive and practical regional preparations for the World Summit for Social Development, to be convened in Copenhagen in 1995, the Commission welcomed the convening of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference in Preparation for the World Summit for Social Development from 12 to 18 October 1994 at Manila to review and assess the progress achieved towards attaining the aims and objectives of the 1991 Manila Declaration on a Social Development Strategy for the ESCAP Region towards the Year 2000 and Beyond. All donor countries, donor agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were called upon to provide financial and technical support for the regional preparations for the World Summit for Social Development. The Executive Secretary was requested to report on the status of implementation of the Manila Declaration at the Ministerial Conference.

35. The Commission adopted the Jakarta Plan of Action on Human Resources Development in the ESCAP Region as refined and updated in 1994, taking into account changing socio-economic conditions in the region, as a guideline to be applied by the Commission and its members and associate members in accordance with the differing economic and social conditions prevailing in the countries and territories of the region. All members and associate members were urged to accord priority to the formulation and implementation of policies, plans and programmes to promote human resources development as an integral aspect of development. Those members and associate members that had yet to establish national focal points for human resources development were invited to do so to oversee the implementation of the Jakarta Plan of Action at the national and subnational levels, and to participate as active members in the region-wide ESCAP Network of National Focal Points for Human Resources Development. The Executive Secretary was requested, to intensify efforts to promote the further

implementation of the Jakarta Plan of Action, particularly human resources development activities (i) targeting the rural and urban poor, in particular the unemployed, women, youth, the landless, disabled persons, the elderly and minority groups, as the primary beneficiaries; (ii) enhancing national capabilities by promoting human resources development policies that were compatible with economic growth and promoted flexibility and continuous skill development; (iii) promoting gender equity and women's empowerment as primary considerations in all human resources development policy formulation, planning and programming, monitoring and evaluation; (iv) strengthening intersectoral cooperation between government, non-governmental organizations and private enterprises in the human resources development process; (v) facilitating intraregional exchange of experience and expertise through the ESCAP Network of National Focal Points for Human Resources Development; (vi) enhancing the skills of government and non-governmental personnel in the planning and delivery of human resources development services through the provision of training. The Executive Secretary was also requested to prepare an inventory of centres of excellence in the region.

36. In its resolution on strengthening subregional economic cooperation in North-East Asia, the Commission, encouraged by the establishment of several growth areas and economic zones in Asia and the Pacific as an important step towards solving the practical problems of regional integration among members and associate members at different stages of economic development and with different economic systems and noting that the countries in the North-East subregion had significant complementarities in terms of surplus capital and technological capabilities on the one hand, and labour force and rich natural and other resources on the other, requested the Executive Secretary to continue ESCAP initiatives and efforts in promoting subregional economic cooperation in general, and trade, investment, transport, communications and environmental cooperation for sustainable development in North-East Asia in particular. Members and associate members were requested to express their views on the ways and means of promoting subregional economic cooperation in North-East Asia as a stepping stone to regional cooperation. Members and associate members, bilateral and multilateral donors and international organizations were called upon to support ESCAP activities in promoting trade and economic and environmental cooperation for sustainable development in the North-East Asian subregion. The Executive Secretary was requested to make a compilation of proposals on economic development and overall cooperation in North-East Asia, to be submitted to the Steering Group of the Committee for Regional Economic Cooperation and to the Committee for Regional Economic Cooperation.

37. In its resolution on implementation of the Action Programme for Regional Economic Cooperation in Investment-related Technology Transfer, the Commission noted the potential for the further expansion of flows of technology to the region and among the countries of the region through regional cooperation, the significance of endogenous technological capability in determining the ability of countries to maximize benefits from foreign technologies, and also that technology transfer remained the main avenue through which most developing countries sought technology-led development. It also recognized the importance of investment-related technology transfer for sustainable economic development and endogenous technological capability-building, especially for the least developed, land-locked and island developing countries and the economies in

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transition. The importance of involving ESCAP regional institutions and projects in the implementation of the Action Programme was stressed. Members and associate members, and their private sectors, were requested to support and participate actively in the implementation of the Action Programme, including facilitating the access to and provision of information on technology flows and technological building efforts. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Asian Development Bank and donor countries were invited to enhance their involvement in technology transfer and capacity-building activities in the Asia and Pacific region by collaborating actively with ESCAP to address the expressed needs of the recipient countries in the implementation of the Action Programme, while the relevant organizations of the United Nations system were urged to cooperate with ESCAP in the planning and implementation of specific activities of the Action Programme to avoid duplication of effort and ensure effective utilization of available resources.

38. The Commission approved the proposals for the second revision to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, which upon its subsequent adoption by the General Assembly, would provide the framework for preparing the ESCAP programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. The Commission also decided on the general considerations to be followed in the selection of activities for inclusion in the ESCAP programme of work as well as the criteria for setting the relative priorities among the activities under the programme.

3. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

39. At its twenty-fifth session, held from 20 to 27 April 1994, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean adopted seven resolutions of particular interest to the Economic and Social Council.

Resolution 541 (XXV). Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields: implications for the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

40. The Commission expressed its appreciation for the effective work done by the secretariat of the Commission and the significant contributions it had made to economic thinking and to Latin American and Caribbean development efforts, both in the analytical and operational fields and in the area of intraregional and international economic cooperation. It expressed its belief that the current process of restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields should give due consideration to the usefulness of the regional, multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach which had characterized the Commission's work. It recommended that the current process of restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations should consider whether the Commissions might undertake the following tasks, among others: (a) act as the focal points of the United Nations system; (b) direct and take responsibility for coordination and cooperation activities at the regional level and present views and recommendations on those activities; (c) provide inputs

for the global policy-making processes of the competent United Nations bodies; (d) participate actively in operational activities; and (e) help strengthen regional cooperation and promote interregional cooperation. It also recommended that the States members of the Commission, through their representatives to the General Assembly, support the early implementation of the overall process of restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, taking into account the foregoing recommendations.

Resolution 534 (XXV). Open regionalism

41. The Commission noted with satisfaction the secretariat document entitled "Open regionalism in Latin America and the Caribbean", which offered a useful frame of reference for suggesting to Governments actions aimed at strengthening the regional integration process and reconciling it with the imperative of improving the linkages of the Latin American and Caribbean economies with the international economy. The Commission stressed the usefulness of the concept of "open regionalism" advanced by the secretariat as a means of combining the interdependence created by preferential integration agreements with that stemming basically from liberalization and deregulation in the context of globalization. The Commission also asked the secretariat to study the convergence among the various regional and subregional integration processes in Latin America and the Caribbean and the possible participation of all the countries of the region in wider trade arrangements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement, together with the effects associated with individual and/or joint incorporation of the countries of the region into those arrangements. Lastly, it recommended that the document on open regionalism in Latin America and the Caribbean be widely disseminated.

Resolution 548 (XXV). Health, social equity and changing production patterns

42. The Commission welcomed the document prepared jointly by the ECLAC secretariat and the Pan American Health Organization, entitled "Health, social equity and changing production patterns in Latin America and the Caribbean", which constituted a valuable input for health promotion policies by demonstrating that short-term progress towards the achievement of social equity could be made in that field. The Commission instructed the Executive Secretary to ensure that the document was submitted to the Ad Hoc Meeting of Ministers of Economic Affairs and Health, to be organized jointly by the secretariat and the Pan American Health Organization, which would take place at the twenty-fourth Pan American Sanitary Conference, to be held at Washington, D.C. in September 1994.

Resolution 533 (XXV). International linkages

43. The Commission welcomed the document prepared by the ECLAC secretariat, entitled "Latin America and the Caribbean: policies to improve linkages with the global economy", which provided an up-to-date frame of reference to guide the ongoing efforts of Governments to improve the linkages of the countries of

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the region with the international economy. The Commission requested the secretariat to give priority to the following topics: (a) the readaptation of public policies to reflect an integrated strategy for promoting competitiveness; (b) the guidelines contained in the document for meso-economic policies (education, training, technological innovation and dissemination, export and investment promotion and the financing and management of infrastructure) and the interrelationship between those guidelines and macroeconomic and microeconomic factors in activities to promote competitiveness; (c) production and trade linkages in export chains; (d) fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policy instruments to enhance the contribution of capital flows to macroeconomic stability and capital formation; (e) appropriate instruments to improve access by the region to international capital markets and prudential regulation to ensure the smooth operation of national capital markets; and (f) the appropriate adaptation of instruments for the promotion of production and exports so that they were useful to individual economies at various levels of internationalization. The Commission also recommended that the secretariat of ECLAC widely disseminate the document.

Resolution 546 (XXV). Programme of further cooperation and integration between Latin America and the Caribbean

44. The Commission urged the Latin American and Caribbean countries to compile and exchange information on trade and foreign investment and requested the integration secretariats of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Permanent Secretariat of the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration (SIECA) and the subregional headquarters of ECLAC to submit proposals for effectively furthering integration and economic cooperation between the Caribbean and Latin America, including the conclusion of free trade agreements and the promotion of joint ventures in industry, agriculture and services. The Commission further requested the ECLAC secretariat to support, within its general sphere of competence and in coordination with the integration secretariats, the recent efforts towards the establishment of an association of Caribbean States.

Resolution 536 (XXV). Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development

45. The Commission approved the preliminary draft and adopted it as the "Draft Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development", which was to incorporate the inputs generated by the International Conference on Population and Development. It decided to establish an ECLAC sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development, composed of representatives of the States members of ECLAC, which would have final responsibility for the follow-up and review of the draft and, subsequently, of the plan of action. It also decided to request that the ECLAC secretariat support the presiding officers of the Committee of High-level Government Experts (CEGAN) and, as appropriate, the Ad Hoc Committee, as well as the subregional organizations, in their coordination of regional and subregional

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activities, in close cooperation with international organizations and competent United Nations agencies, in particular the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Resolution 535 (XXV). World Summit for Social Development

46. One of the main objectives of the twenty-fifth session of ECLAC was to consider how the collective aspirations of the Latin American and Caribbean member States should be presented at the World Summit for Social Development. Those countries had adopted Guidelines for a Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on the World Summit for Social Development. The Guidelines stated that the magnitude of social problems in the region was such that it was not likely that they could be resolved through packages of sectoral policies, assistance measures or the mere existence of social security systems. There was a need for an integrated approach that would deal with changes in production and social equity in a simultaneous and complementary manner, linking them to the security of citizens, respect for individual and collective rights, civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights and peace.

47. The Commission (including the non-Latin American and Caribbean member States) adopted resolution 535 (XXV), in which it expressed its satisfaction with the note entitled "The Social Summit: A view from Latin America and the Caribbean" submitted by the secretariat, which provided important guidelines for preparations for the Summit by the States members of the Commission and included several proposals for action both at the national level and in the context of regional and international cooperation. The Commission took note with appreciation of the Guidelines for a Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on the World Summit for Social Development and requested the secretariat to attach the utmost importance to the preparatory activities for the Summit. It also requested the Executive Secretary to redirect the activities so far devoted to the periodic holding of the Regional Conference on Poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean towards preparatory and follow-up activities for the Social Summit.

Other resolutions adopted by ECLAC at its twenty-fifth session

48. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted resolutions on the programme of work for the period 1996-1997 (resolution 538 (XXV)) and on the calendar of conferences for the period 1994-1996 (resolution 537 (XXV)). It also adopted resolution 540 (XXV), which set priorities for the work of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE); resolution 549 (XXV) on coordination for development; and resolution 550 (XXV) on support for the Second International Conference of New and Restored Democracies. Other resolutions adopted were: resolution 539 (XXV) on economics and natural disasters; resolution 542 (XXV) on support for the work of the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES); resolution 543 (XXV) on participation of associate members of ECLAC in United Nations conferences; resolution 544 (XXV) on environment and development; resolution 545 (XXV) on housing and urban development in Latin America and the Caribbean; and resolution 547 (XXV) on cooperation among developing countries and regions.

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4. Economic Commission for Africa

49. The Conference of Ministers responsible for economic and social development and planning also adopted the resolutions and decisions summarized below.

Resolution 771 (XXIX). Building critical capacities for accelerated growth and sustained development

50. The Conference of Ministers endorsed a preliminary report entitled "A Framework Agenda for Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa", which included a proposed Regional Action Programme for Technical Cooperation in Capacity-Building and Utilization in Africa and provided a consensus framework embracing the key issues in capacity-building and institutional development, as well as a basis for a more detailed study to be presented at the 1995 meeting of the Conference of Ministers. The Executive Secretary was requested to undertake further studies aimed at strengthening the Framework Agenda, on the basis of which detailed programmes of action in capacity-building at the national, subregional and regional levels could be designed for implementation in the short and medium term.

Resolution 772 (XXIX). Preparations for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

51. The Conference of Ministers endorsed the "Declaration of African Ministers responsible for Human Settlements on the Preparatory Process to the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)", which provided a collective strategy for effective African participation in the preparatory process and called upon all member States to participate in that process, especially through the timely preparation of national reports.

Resolution 773 (XXIX). Preparations for the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction

52. The Conference of Ministers adopted the African Common Position for the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, held in Yokohama, Japan from 23 to 27 May 1994; urged member States to strengthen cooperation among themselves in fostering the objective and goals of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and to pursue the African Strategies for the Implementation of Agenda 21; and encouraged the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, in particular the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, to intensify its efforts in cooperation with all Africa's development partners to support the efforts of member States, particularly within the framework of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, national, subregional and regional research and development institutions, and non-governmental organizations to reduce the impact and minimize the effects of natural disasters in Africa.

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Resolution 774 (XXIX). Strategy and programme of action for marine/ocean development in Africa

53. The Conference of Ministers called upon all African States to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and enact laws claiming jurisdiction over maritime zones as provided for in the Convention; establish a coordinating mechanism for marine affairs, and establish or strengthen their national framework for policy formulation in the realms of food, energy and materials so as to give the needed thrust and emphasis to the rational development and optimal utilization of their marine resources; in particular, the policy framework should accord high priority to marine science and technology and the development of the necessary human and institutional infrastructure.

Resolution 775 (XXIX). Establishment of a trust fund for peace-building, post-conflict rehabilitation, reconstruction and development

54. The Conference of Ministers called upon all African member States, friendly donor countries and financial and economic institutions to appreciate the difficult post-conflict situations facing African countries and to extend their generous contribution to the establishment of the fund and requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to institute the mechanisms required to ensure the establishment, proper management and utilization of the fund.

Resolution 778 (XXIX). The situation in the least developed countries

55. The Conference of Ministers noted with concern the worsening socio-economic situation of the least developed countries, the majority of which were in Africa, and called upon Africa's development partners to intensify their efforts towards the implementation of the Paris Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries.

Resolution 779 (XXIX). Strengthening the operational capacity of the Economic Commission for Africa

56. The Conference of Ministers appealed to all bilateral and international partners that currently assisted the Commission or intended to do so, in particular member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the League of Arab States and their cooperation agencies to work further at strengthening their cooperation with the Commission by financing its subregional and regional projects and programmes and also made a special appeal to the European Union to facilitate the access of African States and their intergovernmental organizations to those resources reserved for the financing of regional projects.

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Resolution 781 (XXIX). Development of the private sector for the accelerated implementation of the programme for the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa and beyond

57. The Conference of Ministers called upon African countries to adopt concrete measures to create and sustain an enabling environment which would foster the development of the private sector and African entrepreneurship, including the promotion of the role of women in the industrial development of Africa, and requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission and the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to provide African countries with increased support for the development of their private sector.

Resolution 782 (XXIX). Development of basic industries for the structural transformation of African economies

58. The Conference of Ministers called upon African Governments to mobilize and pool their resources in a collective endeavour to establish and sustain basic industries, especially within the framework of subregional development organizations and economic communities; requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission, in cooperation with the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and the President of the African Development Bank, to undertake the necessary follow-up actions in promoting Africa's basic industries, particularly the national and subregional projects contained in the programme for the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa; and appealed to the donor community to assist African countries in establishing basic industries through the provision of financial resources and joint ventures.

Resolution 783 (XXIX). The Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations

59. The Conference of Ministers adopted the Tunis Declaration on the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations; called upon the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in the framework of the African multilateral trade negotiations, and in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity, to assist African countries to adequately prepare for the evaluation of the results called for in section 9 of the Punta del Este Ministerial Declaration; and agreed that an international conference should be organized in Tunis, under the auspices of the Commission, in collaboration with the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the International Trade Centre, on technical assistance to African countries, with the aim of enabling their economies to adapt to the new international trade environment, and more particularly, to the outcome of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations.

Resolution 784 (XXIX). Africa and the crisis in international commodity agreements

60. The Conference of Ministers urged African countries to strengthen their cooperative efforts in negotiations for successor agreements to major international agreements and invited the Common Fund for Commodities, the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and other relevant institutions to provide financial and other assistance to help African countries to diversify their economies.

Resolution 785 (XXIX). Promotion and expansion of intra-African trade

61. The Conference of Ministers called upon African countries to implement measures designed to encourage intra-African trade and subregional groupings to harmonize their investment and trade policies, including the progressive reduction of tariff and non-tariff barriers, and urged them to transform, as much as possible, their raw materials through processing in order to increase value added to their exports and to explore opportunities for exchange of goods as a way of temporarily alleviating their balance-of-payments difficulties.

Resolution 786 (XXIX). Strategies for the Revitalization, Recovery and Growth of Africa's Trade in the 1990s and Beyond

62. The Conference of Ministers invited the Follow-up Committee to carry out its mandate; requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to provide the Committee with the required technical support; and called upon African countries to implement the policies and measures contained in the Strategies.

Resolution 787 (XXIX). Science and technology for development

63. The Conference of Ministers, recalling its resolution 757 (XXVIII) of 4 May 1993 on the restructuring of the intergovernmental machinery of the Commission, which established the African Regional Conference for Science and Technology, requested the Commission, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, in collaboration with other relevant agencies, to develop and recommend mechanisms, including science and technology indicators for evaluating the developments in and management of science and technology in the member States.

Resolution 788 (XXIX). Establishment of an African monetary fund

64. The Conference of Ministers reaffirmed its commitment to work towards the effective establishment of the proposed African Monetary Fund and mandated the Executive Secretary of the Commission, the President of the African Development

Bank, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and the Director-General of the African Centre for Monetary Studies to continue with the studies needed to bring the proposed African Monetary Fund into being and to report on the progress made to the Conference of African Ministers of Finance at its sixth session.

Resolution 790 (XXIX). Capacity-building for statistical development in Africa

65. The Conference of Ministers urged African Governments to vigorously implement actions to be taken at the national level as recommended in the Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa in the 1990s; urged both the multilateral and bilateral donor agencies having an interest in capacity-building in Africa to provide further support at the national, subregional and regional levels to facilitate the work of the Coordinating Committee on African Statistical Development and to recognize that the need to build capacity at the regional level in the Economic Commission for Africa - as the regional organization with a mandate for the promotion of statistical development - is as important as the promotion of capacity at the national level.

Resolution 791 (XXIX). Change of name of the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) to African Centre for Women (ACW)

66. The Conference of Ministers recommended that the African Training and Research Centre for Women change its name to "African Centre for Women" in order to reflect the scope of its activities, which include monitoring changes in socio-economic development trends; ensuring that African women's concerns were adequately addressed; and designing and implementing programmes for the advancement of women in line with the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, the Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: the Role of Women in the 1990s, the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women and any other relevant policy framework. The African Centre for Women was requested to intensify its working relationship with government machineries concerned with the advancement of women and to work closely with non-governmental organizations in order to ensure greater impact at the grass-roots level, in keeping with the provisions of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation.

Resolution 792 (XXIX). An integrated approach to women's empowerment: The Kampala Action Plan on Women and Peace; violation of women's human rights; and women's economic empowerment

67. The Conference of Ministers resolved to adopt the Kampala Action Plan on Women and Peace; strongly urged African Governments, non-governmental organizations, women, grass-roots organizations, youth, United Nations agencies

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and other international organizations to participate actively in the implementation of the Kampala Action Plan by setting aside resources for its implementation and setting up mechanisms for monitoring programmes and activities in this regard on a regular basis; called upon Governments to enact laws and other legal instruments that would guarantee safety from violence against the individual woman and in families while revising those that might work against this principle; ensure the prosecution of offenders in this context and identify and legislate against cultural practices that reinforced physical and psychological oppression of women; and exhorted member States to take the necessary legislative, monetary and banking measures to facilitate the promotion of women's entrepreneurship at the national, subregional and regional levels.

Resolution 793 (XXIX). Strengthening and developing capacities in support of regional seed pathology in Africa

68. The Conference of Ministers appealed to member States of the Commission to provide voluntarily financial support for the transformation of the seed pathology test centre in Egypt into a regional centre for Africa; requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to prepare the documentation necessary to mobilize the resources needed for the implementation, on a sustainable basis, of the project on the regional seed pathology centre; and invited Africa's development partners, in particular the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme, the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, as well as bilateral partners, to provide financial support to efforts to create the regional seed pathology centre.

Decision 1 (XXIX). Revised mandate of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Demographers and Information Scientists

69. The Conference of Ministers approved the amendments to the terms of reference of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Demographers and Information Scientists, by which the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Demographers would become the Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Population and Information Specialists, which would act within the framework of the policies and procedures of the United Nations and be subject to the general supervision of the Economic Commission for Africa. The members of the Conference will be government officials in charge of the national planning, statistical and population agencies and the information/documentation institutions of the States members of the Economic Commission for Africa, or their representatives. Representation of all other Governments and bodies will follow the same rules as for sessions of the Economic Commission for Africa. The Conference will meet once every two years and report to the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa.

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Decision 2 (XXIX). Programme of work of the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD), 1994-1996

70. The Conference of Ministers approved the programme of work and budget (1994-1996) for the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development.

Declaration 1 (XXIX). Declaration on the re-integration of new democratic South Africa into Africa

71. Recalling that South Africa had been one of the founding members of the Economic Commission for Africa and that by Economic and Social Council resolution 974 D (XXXVI) had been excluded from the work of the Commission until such time as it abandoned its racial policies, the Conference of Ministers welcomed the radical changes that had taken place in South Africa since February 1990, particularly the dismantling of the system of apartheid, the adoption of a democratic constitution and the holding of the first non-racial general elections. The Conference of Ministers called upon the international community and the multilateral financial and development institutions to lend their support to South Africa and to provide such assistance as might be requested by the new South African Government. It also requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to submit a report to the Council, in conformity with its resolution 974 D (XXXVI), to recommend the readmission of South Africa as a member of the Commission.

Declaration 2 (XXIX). Declaration on a human development plan of action for Africa

72. The Conference of Ministers expressed deep concern that in spite of all the commitments made and the actions taken by African Governments and people, the human and social situation in Africa had continued to deteriorate to the extent that many of the gains made earlier in human well-being had now been reversed. Those deteriorating conditions further compounded the problems of building and strengthening development capacity in the region. The Conference of Ministers stated that although Africa's development would be brought about only through the hard work and determination of Africans themselves, their efforts must be complemented by the concerted action and unflinching support of their development partners - bilateral and multilateral agencies, international non-governmental organizations and others. To that end, official development assistance (ODA) in support of human development should increase from its present level to at least 20 per cent towards building and strengthening human capacity in Africa. The Conference of Ministers requested the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to prepare a human development plan of action for Africa, in cooperation with the members of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Human Development in Africa.

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5. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

73. At its seventeenth session, the Commission also adopted the resolutions summarized below.

Resolution 199 (XVII). Medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997

74. The Commission, taking note of the conclusions of the Consultation on the Restructuring of ESCWA Programmes, held in Amman from 31 January to 3 February 1994, approved the amendments included in the second revision of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, with the proviso that the comments made by the delegations during the session, concerning the challenges that faced the ESCWA member States, would be reflected in the final document.

Resolution 200 (XVII). Draft revision of the programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1994-1995

75. The Commission endorsed the revised programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1994-1995 as amended, with the proviso that the comments made by the delegations during the session, concerning the challenges that faced the ESCWA member States, would be reflected in the final document.

Resolution 201 (XVII). Proposed outline of the programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1996-1997

76. The Commission approved the proposed outline of the programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1996-1997, with the proviso that the comments made by the delegations during the session, concerning the challenges that faced the ESCWA member States, would be reflected in the final document.

Resolution 202 (XVII). United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

77. The Commission urged member States to continue to participate actively in the preparations for the Conference at the national, regional and global levels, and to make substantive contributions to ensure its success, and requested the Executive Secretary to coordinate and facilitate, within the limits of available resources, regional activities, including regional meetings, in preparation for Habitat II, and to report to the Commission at its eighteenth session on the implementation of the resolution.

Resolution 203 (XVII). Follow-up of the decisions and recommendations of the Intergovernmental Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women

78. The Commission stressed the need to strengthen national and regional institutional mechanisms and non-governmental organizations for the advancement

of women; urged all Governments to establish national governmental and non-governmental joint committees and to designate focal points for the preparations for the Conference; and appealed to regional and international donors to provide the ESCWA secretariat with the support necessary for implementing the recommendations and decisions of the Intergovernmental Regional Preparatory Meeting with regard to regional action for the advancement of women and their integration into the development process at the national and regional levels.

II. WORK OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

A. Economic Commission for Europe

79. Events in the region have continued to be marked by historic transformations affecting the entire ECE region which pose new challenges and opportunities for regional cooperation and create the need for Governments and intergovernmental organizations to address these issues collectively with a view to elaborating cooperative solutions and initiatives. Some of these developments are also seen as a source of uncertainty and concern which might jeopardize achievements in the field of European economic cooperation. The risk of social unrest in the countries in transition as a result of unexpected difficulties in moving to the market economy has also been a factor to contend with.

80. ECE member States have continued to experience economic adjustment difficulties during the past year, as the process of transition to a market economy has proved to be more difficult and complex than originally envisaged. The predominant concerns during this period included the continuing recession in western Europe, rising unemployment in most ECE countries and the fragility of the transition process, in both political and economic terms. Most of the transition economies remained in a deep depression with continuing high inflation. Armed conflicts still persisted in several ECE countries despite the efforts of the international community to restore peace and stability. None the less the success of economic transition in central and eastern Europe is crucial to stability in Europe as a whole.

81. In most of the transition countries the continuing recession, including the large cumulative fall in output since 1989, has aggravated the already complex process of transition. They have encountered difficulties in overcoming macroeconomic imbalances and in making progress in structural reforms, including institution building for a market economy. Some Governments are of the view that the social consequences of transition also deserve as much attention as the economic dimensions. The transition countries have expressed their appreciation for the financial and technical assistance that has been extended to them by other Governments, although they stress that assistance programmes should be undertaken in a cooperative and coordinated manner within the framework of international organizations and institutions as well as at the bilateral level.

82. Other ECE member Governments have emphasized the need to assess the consequences for their countries of the application of sanctions imposed on the

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and find ways to mitigate the consequences.

83. The Commission's membership has increased from 45 to 54 countries since its forty-eighth session in 1993, with the admission of Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Monaco, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. This evolution has conferred upon ECE new responsibilities in meeting the needs of its new member countries in transition and facilitating their integration into the European and global economy. Governments have expressed the view that the Commission should continue to play a significant role in the promotion of European and global integration in close cooperation with other actors in the field.

84. Assistance to countries in transition has become a guiding principle of the Commission. Governments attach importance to the Commission's efforts to diversify its activities to meet the needs of the countries in transition. The continuing process of adaptation of structures and programmes under way in ECE in response to the changing realities in the region and taking into account its comparative advantages has been welcomed by member Governments. Measures taken to strengthen the role of the regional commissions in general and to enable ECE in particular to introduce regional advisory services have been commended. In this context there is support for ECE becoming a focal point within the United Nations for the coordination of activities designed to assist countries in transition.

85. Important integration processes are taking place at the regional and subregional levels, where economic cooperation and free trade agreements between countries from all parts of the region have been or are being established. The membership negotiations between the European Union and Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden have been successfully concluded and this new process of European integration is expected to provide for additional dynamism in trade relations with third countries. Particular attention should also be given to integration taking place not only in North America but also between the economies in transition, the free trade agreements established between the Nordic and the Baltic countries, as well as the ongoing negotiations on free trade agreements between the European Union and the Baltic countries.

86. The European Union has been actively pursuing specific activities to strengthen economic stability in the region and enhance regional integration. The coming into force of the Maastricht Treaty was a decisive step towards the construction of a new Europe. The enlargement of the Union is expected to have a dynamic impact on exchanges between the Union and other countries and to assist in intensifying cooperation in its transatlantic relations. The European Council, at its meeting in Copenhagen in June 1993, approved measures to foster closer association with Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria. Provisions had been agreed for the acceleration of improvements in market access for more effective assistance and furthering economic integration. Associated countries in central and eastern Europe that so desired could become members of the European Union, as soon as they satisfied the necessary political and economic requirements. The Brussels Council, in December 1993, had taken further measures designed to increase the competitiveness of the European Union economies and thus create more jobs.

Cooperation had also been strengthened with the Russian Federation and the newly independent States with the negotiation of partnership and cooperation agreements covering a broad range of political, economic and commercial relations.

87. The importance of improved market access as a means of fostering structural change and improving international competitiveness has been underlined by the transition countries. Market access for the goods and services of countries in transition remains a key issue. They appreciate steps taken by some ECE member States and by the European Union to liberalize regional trade, including the agreements on partnership and cooperation currently under negotiation. However, at the same time they continue to stress the existence of a variety of protective measures, such as anti-dumping, applied by western countries, which require a rapid solution.

88. Some western Governments, noting that the ECE Committee on the Development of Trade has decided to organize a round table on the positive conclusions of the Uruguay Round with respect to intraregional trade, are of the view that the discussion should take account of the real market access situation in the region, rather than concentrating on limited and transitory problems. These complex problems concern the need to increase competitiveness of the countries in transition to enable them to compete better in world markets. It is suggested that internal constraints in their economies, such as weak domestic financial support, inadequate infrastructures and a lack of information on international markets, sometimes outweigh the importance of the remaining external barriers to trade of these countries.

89. The countries of the region have hailed the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and the setting up of the World Trade Organization (WTO) as a historic turning point in international economic relations. Improvement of market access, the integration of new business sectors and the reinforcement of multilateral regulations and discipline should contribute to the development of world trade, economic growth and job creation. The fact that most countries in transition of the region have applied for membership in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and that some were renegotiating their former protocols of accession was seen as a positive sign. ECE has decided to take up the theme of "Impact of the positive conclusions of the Uruguay Round on intraregional trade" and will provide analytical input concerning general issues of interest to countries in transition in their negotiations for accession to GATT and the new WTO.

90. Economic growth has gained momentum in some western industrialized countries in 1993, which has raised expectations that economic cooperation should be expanding. In a number of countries in eastern Europe, clear signs of recovery in output are visible. At the same time, inflation is down but persistent in the "advanced" group of economies in transition. Considerable progress has been achieved with privatization not only in the "advanced" group of reformers but also in the Russian Federation. Elsewhere, in some of the Baltic States, the privatization experience has proved to be positive.

91. ECE cooperation and coordination of its work with other international organizations and institutions active in these fields, such as the European

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Community, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Council of Europe, has been further intensified this year. The Conference of European Statisticians has set an example by developing an integrated presentation of the statistical work programmes of ECE, the Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT) and OECD.

92. ECE has intensified its long-standing cooperation with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) as a multilateral instrument for the implementation of CSCE recommendations in the fields of economy, environment and science and technology. The CSCE Charter of Paris for a New Europe assigned to ECE a central role within the United Nations for the economic construction of a new Europe. The Commission participated actively in the second meeting of the CSCE Economic Forum, held in March 1994. The Commission has called for close cooperation between ECE and CSCE, particularly in the organization of seminars or workshops, combining the topics identified at the CSCE Economic Forum with ECE expertise. ECE intends to make a constructive contribution to the CSCE Budapest Review Conference to be held in October 1994.

93. ECE work in the priority areas of environment, transport, statistics, trade facilitation and economic analysis continues to enjoy the strong support of member countries. Governments continue to attach great importance to the Commission's work in the field of environment. During the past year ECE has contributed significantly to the further development of international environmental law and to discussions of pan-European environmental policies. Special attention has been given to development and implementation of regional legally binding instruments for environmental protection, in particular the new sulphur protocol, which would be open for signature at Oslo in June 1994.

94. ECE will serve as the central coordinating body for the further development of the "Environment for Europe" process in addition to carrying out the tasks mandated by the Ministerial Conference held at Lucerne, Switzerland, in April 1993, namely, to prepare the next ministerial conference to be held in Sofia, Bulgaria, in 1995. The Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Environmental and Water Problems have become more policy-oriented and have been renamed the Committee on Environmental Policy. A system of environmental performance reviews developed by ECE in close cooperation with OECD have been introduced. The work of the Joint Working Group on Environment and Economics has also continued to enjoy government support.

95. In recognizing the growing impact of transport on the environment the Commission has agreed to convene a regional conference on transport and the environment within the framework of ECE in 1996, in close cooperation with other competent international organizations and the European Union.

96. Governments attach great importance to transport development in the ECE region in the context of the current economic and social changes occurring in the region. Particular attention is given to work on the development of transport infrastructure and regulatory measures, seen as essential for the development of an integrated and balanced European transport system, which is in turn a prerequisite for economic growth and sustainable development for all countries of the ECE region. Member countries continue to support the work on

the elaboration of Pan-European Transport Networks, the Trans-European Motorway (TEM) and Trans-European Railway (TER) Projects, on traffic safety information to young drivers and road users, the transport of dangerous goods and the simplification of customs formalities.

97. ECE work on trade facilitation, notably the continuing development and global extension of UN/EDIFACT, has attracted great attention. Governments have also expressed satisfaction with the results achieved in the implementation of the Energy Efficiency 2000 project and its demonstration zones and welcomed the proposal for a second phase of the project for another three years. The principal objective of the project is to reduce the gap between energy efficient industry in the west and energy intensive industry in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

98. A number of Mediterranean member countries of ECE sponsored General Assembly resolution 48/81 on strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region, recognizing and reaffirming the enhancement of cooperation among Mediterranean countries with a view to promoting the economic, cultural, environmental and social development of the region. These Governments have proposed that ECE identify areas of possible economic cooperation in the Mediterranean and that it compile a register of bilateral agreements and treaties among all Mediterranean countries with a view to enlarging cooperation and widening dialogue.

99. Social aspects have become an important element of development concepts in the ECE region. Since its forty-eighth session, the Commission has become more involved in activities relating to the social aspects of economic issues within its programme of work. The Commission's involvement in the preparations for United Nations world conferences addressing social issues are clear examples of such activity. While the Commission could accomplish valuable work in these areas, the primary focus of the Commission's activities remains on economic questions.

B. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

100. The continuing economic dynamism of the ESCAP region was reflected in the high average growth rate of 6.7 per cent in 1993, despite a sluggish performance of the world economy. With such evidence of steady momentum, the region seems to have emerged as an engine of growth for the international economy. However, a sizeable number of economies were unable to join in the region's overall economic dynamism and strong growth: most of the least developed, land-locked and island developing countries and the disadvantaged economies in transition grew slowly or not at all. The main thrust of the work of the Commission during 1993 was accordingly directed to sustain and further spread the development momentum on the one hand and to providing impetus for the development of the disadvantaged economies on the other.

101. Under the subprogramme on regional economic cooperation, implementation of the Action Programme for Regional Economic Cooperation in Trade and Investment began in earnest to promote those objectives. An expert group meeting was convened at Changchung, China, on development of transitional economies in

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north-east Asia through intraregional trade expansion and subregional economic cooperation. Operational activities included technical assistance in intraregional trade and investment; strengthening the role of the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) and the Asian Reinsurance Corporation (ARC); trade information; market and product diversification, including for such commodities as vegetable oil, coffee and jute; and various other export promotion activities, including an exhibition of handicrafts (gift items) from least developed countries held at Tokyo in November 1993. Activities also commenced under a programme funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on exploitation of business opportunities/networks to support trade and commerce, which included, inter alia, the establishment of a network of trade-related research institutions in Asia and the Pacific.

102. Other important activities focused on enhancement of the role of the private sector and on privatization, including the holding of a regional symposium on privatization at Karachi; enhancement of the role of small- and medium-sized enterprises, including the holding of a seminar on the expansion of exports of manufactured products from small- and medium-sized enterprises at Bangkok. A study on intraregional trade flows is under way. A significant development during 1993 was the enlargement of the membership of the Bangkok Agreement with the accession of Papua New Guinea. China also announced its decision to accede to the Agreement, thereby focusing renewed interest on the Agreement. Advisory missions focused on trade and investment policy issues and, in the case of Pacific Island countries, advisory missions on the promotion of trade and investment linkage with Asia were undertaken.

103. An important component of the subprogramme on regional economic cooperation relates to strengthening of cooperation between ESCAP and subregional organizations. A memorandum of understanding between the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and ESCAP was signed in July 1993. A Framework Agreement between the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and ESCAP was signed in February 1994. ESCAP took the initiative in organizing a consultative meeting among executive heads of subregional organizations and ESCAP, which was held at Bangkok on 4 February 1994. At that meeting, there was general consensus on the need for cooperation and exchange of information among and between the organizations on a regular basis. Trade and investment, transport and communications, human resources development and energy were tentatively identified as the areas for exploring possibilities for cooperation in the initial stages.

104. Activities to promote the participation of women in industrial development, the implementation of the Seoul Plan of Action for Promoting Industrial Restructuring in Asia and the Pacific, the Tehran Declaration on Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Technology-led Industrialization in Asia and the Pacific, and the Regional Strategy and Action Plan for Industrial and Technological Development in Asia and the Pacific commenced or continued. The Regional Forum for Sustainable Industrial Development and Restructuring in Asia and the Pacific held its first meeting at Kuala Lumpur in December 1993.

105. Work continued in implementing Commission resolution 48/8 of 23 April 1992 on problems faced by the transitional disadvantaged economies in the ESCAP region. National workshops on economic reforms were held in Kazakhstan,

Mongolia and Uzbekistan during the period under review. The workshops addressed four major issues: restoration and maintenance of external macroeconomic stability, replacement of the command economy structure with a competitive environment, restructuring and reform of agricultural and industrial enterprises and minimizing the social costs of economic reforms.

106. The Action Programme for Regional Economic Cooperation in Investment-related Technology Transfer, which was endorsed by the Committee for Regional Economic Cooperation at its third session upon the recommendation of the Steering Group, was adopted by the Commission at its fiftieth session (resolution 50/9). Operational activities included advisory missions on skills needs forecasting, industrial restructuring and technological upgrading, information technology, investment promotion and enhancement of the role of the private sector.

107. The Commission, at its fiftieth session, welcomed the draft action plan on infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific (resolution 50/2) in pursuance of the deliberations on the theme of the session "Infrastructure development as key to economic growth and regional economic cooperation". Those deliberations had highlighted the constraints imposed by the deficiencies in physical infrastructures to the region's growth prospects and suggested measures for action.

108. The trade and investment action programme, the technology action programme and the infrastructure action plan will thus constitute the three main planks, in a mutually reinforcing and supporting manner, of the Commission's activities for strengthened regional cooperation for development.

109. The theme topic study of the Commission at its fiftieth session constituted a major activity under the subprogramme on Transport and communications. The study was also published. The development of transport linkages in mainland Asia was promoted through Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development (ALTID), which comprised projects on the Asian Highway, the Trans-Asian Railway and facilitation of border crossings. Revised Asian Highway standards were agreed to by an expert group meeting. The secretariat provided input to the Outline Plan for the Development of the Transport Sector in the ECO Region. Development of transport databases and forecasting and planning tools continued, including the Maritime Policy Planning Model and financial and economic models. Workshops and advisory services strengthened national capabilities in the development of multimodal transport. Other areas where human resources development was promoted included electronic data interchange in transport and port management. The secretariat continued to assist developing countries in deriving greater socio-economic benefits from a planned and systematic development of tourism by undertaking studies and organizing seminars/meetings.

110. Under the subprogramme on poverty alleviation through economic growth and social development, activities aimed at sustainable agricultural development and the alleviation of rural poverty included a follow-up project on market-generated rural employment; a project on employment strategies for the rural poor; an expert group meeting on sensitizing the agricultural research to community development needs; the project of ESCAP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on sustainable agricultural development

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strategies for the least developed countries; and information, training and advisory services of the ESCAP/FAO/United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Fertilizer Advisory, Development and Information Network for Asia and the Pacific (FADINAP), including a regional workshop on cooperation in soil testing for environmental protection. Activities of the Agricultural Requisites Scheme for Asia and the Pacific concentrated on the reduction of undesirable effects of pesticides on humans, animals and the environment through the propagation of alternatives to pesticides use.

111. The Jakarta Plan of Action on Human Resources Development in the ESCAP Region was refined and updated with a view to making it more relevant to the changing circumstances and to better address the poverty alleviation issues; the new version was adopted by the Commission at its fiftieth session (resolution 50/7). Other activities included initiation of a training project entitled "Reaching the poor through government-NGO cooperation in the planning and delivery of basic social services".

112. An important event organized during 1993 was the Ministerial Conference on Urbanization in Asia and the Pacific, held at Bangkok in October 1993. The Ministers adopted the Bangkok Declaration on Sustainable Urban Development and Management in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Plan on Urbanization. The Conference established the Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, bringing together government officials and representatives of local authorities, non-governmental organizations, and research and training institutions. The Network of Training, Research and Information Institutes in Human Settlements in Asia and the Pacific (TRISHNET) was formally established. The Report on the State of Urbanization in Asia and the Pacific, 1993 was published. The secretariat continued to strengthen the Regional Network of Local Authorities (CITYNET), assisting it in implementing various activities.

113. The secretariat continued to promote an integrated approach to population planning within the overall framework of social and economic development of the region. A Senior Officials Meeting on Targets and Goals of the Bali Declaration was held at Bangkok in January 1994 with a view to incorporating the recommendations of the Bali Declaration within the regional document for the forthcoming International Conference on Population and Development. Technical assistance, inter alia, focused on implications of urban migration and population ageing for socio-economic development plans and on strategies on ageing.

114. The secretariat intensified its activities in support of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, and the Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region. Two Workshops on Management of Self-help Organizations of Disabled Persons were convened, in Dhaka and in Manila, as well as an Expert Group Meeting on Non-handicapping Environments for Disabled and Elderly Persons. Concerning elderly persons, the secretariat prepared a study on integration of elderly persons in development. With regard to drug abuse and HIV infection, the secretariat contributed to the development of integrated community-based approaches to drug demand reduction, and strengthening of a regional network of national focal points on drug demand reduction. Health concerns were

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highlighted in a special chapter in the Economic and Social Survey, 1993, specially in terms of their links with other sectors, in particular education.

115. The secretariat contributed to national efforts to implement the Social Development Strategy for the ESCAP Region Towards the Year 2000 and Beyond. Preparations were in hand for the Regional Ministerial Conference, to be held at Manila in October 1994, in preparation for the World Summit for Social Development. An Asian and Pacific Preparatory Meeting for the International Year of the Family was convened. Advisory services focused on the implementation of the Social Development Strategy, crime prevention policies and programmes and planning and delivery of social services.

116. The secretariat undertook preparations for the Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development to be held at Jakarta in June 1993, which will also constitute a regional preparation for the global ministerial meeting. It convened the Asian and Pacific Symposium of Non-Governmental Organizations on Women in Development, which drafted an NGO Plan of Action for Advancement of Women in Asia and the Pacific. It also convened an Expert Group Meeting on Women in Development. It organized national workshops for and provided technical advisory services to national women's information networks.

117. Under the subprogramme on environment and sustainable development, activities have been formulated in response to the growing concerns about environmental degradation, owing to rising energy requirements, excessive pressure on land leading to its overuse for agricultural production and unsustainable exploitation of forest resources. Activities in the field of environment focused on the integration of environmental considerations into planning and decision-making, raising environmental awareness, management of the terrestrial ecosystem and coastal environment, environmentally sound coastal tourism, planning for environmental technology, and hazardous waste management, which were integral parts of the Regional Strategy on Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development. Other activities concentrated on capacity-building, promotion of regional cooperation, development of tools and methodologies, conducting case-studies, and support for the follow-up activities to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

118. A high-level meeting of experts put forward a regional framework for sustainable development, which was intended to provide overall guidance in setting national priorities and programming regional-level activities for the implementation of Agenda 21. Preparations for the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1995, were in hand.

119. Activities promoting subregional cooperation in environment included the development of an action plan for capacity-building for coastal and marine environmental protection in South Asia, support for the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Plan of Action on Environment, and support to the Pacific island countries in preparation for the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

120. Cooperation and coordination in the field of environment were pursued through the Inter-Agency Committee on Environment and Development (ICED).

Following the third meeting of ICED, hosted by the Asian Development Bank at Manila in 1993, preparations were under way to convene the 4th meeting of ICED at Jakarta in June 1994, to be hosted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). An inter-agency coordinated plan of action for the implementation of Agenda 21, within the framework of the 1994-1995 work programme, was being prepared.

121. Energy activities included advisory missions on hydrocarbon exploration and hydrocarbon contract agreements and on sectoral energy demand studies; technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) consultations on wind energy; and seminars and training on promotion of energy consultancy services, coal technology and the environment, natural gas and national energy conservation strategies. UNDP decided that ESCAP should be executing agency of the Programme for Asian Cooperation in Energy and the Environment (PACE-E).

122. In the area of mineral resources, activities concentrated on the assessment of geologic and mineral resource potential in selected least developed countries. Foreign investment in the mining and mineral-based industries was promoted, with assistance in evolving national mineral development strategies and mining codes. Activities continued on integration of geo-scientific knowledge into land-use planning, environmental geology applications and urban geology for sustainable development of new economic zones and fast-growing cities.

123. In marine affairs, activities focused on the assessment of marine mineral resources and protection of the marine environment. Activities related to water resources development and management included a Regional Seminar on Water Management in Urban Areas, held at Bangkok, with follow-up national seminars at Hanoi, Bishkek and Tashkent; a workshop on computer applications in groundwater development and management; and roving seminars on comprehensive flood loss prevention and management, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Myanmar, Pakistan and Solomon Islands.

124. UNDP approved a new geographic information systems (GIS)/remote-sensing programme for 1993 to 1996. Activities included a regional seminar on tropical eco-system management, held at Kuala Lumpur, and an international seminar on remote sensing for coastal zone and coral reef applications. Advisory assistance was provided to the national agencies in introducing, assessing and developing remote sensing and GIS technology, and in evaluating projects for sustainable natural resources development and environment management. Preparations for the Ministerial-level Conference on Space Applications for Development in Asia and the Pacific, to be held at Beijing in September 1994, were well in hand. The annual meeting of the directors of national remote-sensing centres was held at Islamabad concurrently with the ninth session of the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee of the ESCAP Regional Remote-sensing Programme.

125. Under the subprogramme on statistics, strengthening of national statistical capabilities continued, through projects on the development of gender statistics and on environmental and resource accounting. Advisory missions were fielded on national accounts; compilation of price and expenditure statistics; utilization of statistical software packages; planning, processing and analysing population

censuses and surveys; and demographic statistics. Technical and substantive support was provided to the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP). Technical meetings focused on environment statistics, data dissemination, monitoring of human development, gender statistics, survey sampling, and national poverty concepts and measurement. The secretariat intensified its efforts to develop a computerized ESCAP statistical information system.

126. Under the subprogramme on least developed, land-locked and island developing countries, secretariat activities in support of least developed countries consisted mainly of initiatives taken in following up the recommendations of the Special Body on Least Developed and Land-locked Developing Countries, at its first session, held in February 1993, as well as in implementing resolution 49/8 on strengthening assistance to the least developed countries, adopted by the Commission at its forty-ninth session. Increased attention has been given to enabling greater participation of least developed countries in activities organized by the secretariat. Advisory missions were undertaken in priority areas identified by the Special Body, particularly in the field of economic modelling and in exploring possibilities for technical assistance under TCDC arrangements available in the region.

127. The secretariat is currently implementing a project on lessons that the least developed countries can learn from the early development experience of the newly industrializing economies (NIEs). Funding has been secured for a project on improving the access of women to formal credit and financial institutions in selected least developed countries and activities under the project have commenced. Another major activity that is expected to give further impetus to the secretariat's work on the least developed countries is the project on the mid-term review of progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, for which desk studies have been initiated in the secretariat.

128. The main activities undertaken in support of the development efforts of the Pacific island developing countries included:

(a) Assessment of their economic performance, with emphasis on analysis of constraints and measures needed to overcome them in the context of development policy and planning;

(b) Examination of the emerging changes in the external environment in the 1990s and their implications with regard to trade, finance and investment;

(c) Identification of critical areas of need in training, particularly in development policy and planning, to be followed up through the provision of consultancy and advisory services and organization of training courses and seminars.

129. As mandated by the Commission, the second session of the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries was held in March 1994. The Special Body reviewed and provided guidance, inter alia, on (a) issues related to recent economic performance and prospects of Pacific island developing countries; (b) patterns and characteristics of ESCAP activities implemented by the

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secretariat, including the ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre; (c) progress in the implementation of Commission resolution 48/9 of 23 April 1992 on strengthening ESCAP assistance to the Pacific island countries.

130. The secretariat, cognizant of the role of economic and technical cooperation among developing countries (ECDC/TCDC) in forging mutually beneficial relationships, had accorded high priority to the enhancement of that modality of cooperation among developing countries of the ESCAP region, especially for the benefit of the least developed, land-locked and island developing countries and the disadvantaged economies in transition. During 1993, the secretariat implemented more than 80 promotional TCDC activities from its extrabudgetary resources. Furthermore, with the support of China, the Netherlands, Norway and the Republic of Korea to the ESCAP TCDC supplementary fund, the secretariat financed 33 operational TCDC activities through the utilization of the ESCAP TCDC supplementary fund, 22 of which were for the benefit of the least developed, land-locked and island developing countries and the disadvantaged economies in transition. Training facilities and local cost contributions provided by the participating countries, particularly China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, helped the implementation of those activities.

131. Following the adoption of Commission resolution 48/2 on restructuring the conference structure of the Commission, the first cycle of meetings of all the committees and special bodies established under the revised conference structure had been completed. The Commission, at its fiftieth session, expressed satisfaction at the quality of the deliberations as well as the level of participation in those meetings and urged members and associate members to sustain that interest. It also commended the efforts made towards reorganizing the secretariat so as to enhance its capability to service the thematic intergovernmental structure subsidiary to the Commission and implement its revised programme of work, and expressed appreciation for the establishment of the interdivisional working groups, which it considered a useful and innovative vehicle to implement thematic programmes.

132. In accordance with the renewed focus and revised priorities established by the Commission, measures have been taken to reinforce the cooperation between ESCAP and various organizations and agencies both within the United Nations system and intergovernmental and other organizations, including non-governmental organizations, working in related fields within the region. The Commission, at its fiftieth session, strongly encouraged the efforts towards greater cooperation and coordination with a view to better harnessing the potentials for promotion of economic and social development in the region.

C. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

133. The activities carried out under the programme of work of the ECLAC system, which includes the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) and the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE), focused on the achievement of sustained economic growth with equity in the Latin American and Caribbean region in order to ensure the social cohesion and political stability that is the foundation of all development.

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134. ECLAC undertook sectoral and multidisciplinary applied research, training and the dissemination of information through the production of four technical documents for the twenty-fifth session of the Commission, held at Cartagena, Colombia, from 20 to 27 April 1994. These documents were: (i) "Health, social equity and changing production patterns in Latin America and the Caribbean"; (ii) "Open regionalism in Latin America and the Caribbean: economic integration as a contribution to changing production patterns with social equity"; (iii) "Latin America and the Caribbean: policies to improve linkages with the global economy"; and (iv) Note by the secretariat entitled "The Social Summit: a view from Latin America and the Caribbean".

135. To provide an overview of agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Agricultural Development Unit published various documents, including the following: "Los nuevos escenarios agrícolas en formación"; "La dendroenergía en América Latina y el Caribe: importancia de los recursos madereros como combustible"; and "Estructura territorial del Estado y ruralidad".

136. It also published "La apertura y los procesos agroexportadores recientes", which reviews the region's agro-export experience of recent years in response to policies of structural adjustment and liberalization of national economies.

137. The monitoring of the economic evolution of the countries of the region involved the preparation of three annual publications. Two of these, *Economic Panorama of Latin America* and *Preliminary Overview of the Economy of Latin America and the Caribbean*, present a timely overview of the situation of the regional economy and are consequently the two ECLAC reports most quoted in the regional and international press and most sought after by countries, banks, international agencies, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The third publication, *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean*, is broad in scope and contains detailed, comprehensive and comparable information on economic trends in the region.

138. An examination of economic policies linked to the crisis faced by the region during the 1980s and major related issues was also undertaken. Special importance was attached to the examination of alternative policies for debt management, the implementation of adjustments geared to growth, and the non-recessionary reduction of inflation.

139. The activities of the Latin American Centre for Economic and Social Documentation (CLADES) focused on strengthening the management of information within the region. As part of the INFOPLAN series, an edition dedicated to the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) was published.

140. With regard to public sector programming, it should be noted that budget policy has been taken up again in the area of resource allocation. ILPES, with the Inter-American Public Budget Association (ASIP), organized a Workshop on Integrated Systems of Financial Administration at Santiago, Chile, from 28 to 30 April 1993. Moreover, in the area of economic reform, priority was given to analysis of the restructuring of the State-owned sector.

141. Special importance was assigned to the issue of industrial restructuring to achieve competitiveness. Much of that effort was channelled through the

ECLAC/UNDP project entitled "Design of policies to strengthen the capacity for technological innovation and enhance international competitiveness in the Latin American entrepreneurial environment". The computer program "Competitive Analysis of Nations" (CAN), designed and created in the Joint ECLAC/United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Industrial and Technological Development Unit, was made available to the public and private institutions of the region for dissemination free of charge.

142. In the field of trade, a total of seven documents were published on trade policy in relation to the current situation and probable evolution of the industrialized economies, trends and prospects for Latin American exports of iron ore products and the analysis of economic relations between Latin America and the developed market economy countries, with reference to trade with the United States and international cooperation with the European Union.

143. In the area of development financing, a Technical Seminar on Financing of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Development of the Stock Market in Latin American Countries was held at Santiago, Chile, on 18 and 19 October 1993. A regional seminar was also held at Asunción, Paraguay, on 22 and 23 November to wind up the activities of the ECLAC/UNDP project entitled "Financial policies for changing production patterns with social equity", with the participation of senior authorities of the Governments of countries of the region.

144. In the area of ocean resources, efforts were devoted to promoting a comparative analysis of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal and the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping Wastes and Other Matter, in order to enable the countries of the region to weigh the need to become parties to both instruments in order to fulfil the objectives of each of them. In this regard, a regional seminar was held at Santiago, Chile, from 15 to 19 November 1993.

145. On the issue of water and in connection with Agenda 21, a meeting of the expert group responsible for studying the possible effects of climate change on the water resources of Latin America and the Caribbean was convened at Santiago from 23 to 25 November 1993. Two courses on integrated water resources management were organized, in cooperation with national and regional institutions, at Guatemala City from 15 to 25 March and from 24 to 28 May 1993, and at Lima, Peru, on 6 and 7 August 1993. A cooperation network was formed and advisory assistance was provided on organizational reforms.

146. In the field of human settlements, activities focused on improving urban development planning in areas of interest to the cities involved. Management tools were refined and appropriate forms of citizens' participation were examined; the issues of the institutionality of municipalities and the prerequisites for incorporating the environmental dimension were constantly borne in mind in conducting the activities.

147. CELADE participated actively in preparatory activities for the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held at Cairo in 1994. In this context, the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development was held in Mexico City from 29 April to 4 May 1993. The purpose of the meeting was to find areas of intergovernmental agreement on the regional population and development situation, with a view to the eventual

adoption of resolutions and recommendations. As a contribution to the discussion, ECLAC and CELADE published a book entitled Population, Social Equity and Changing Production Patterns.

148. The Social Development Division played a key role in preparations for the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Meeting Preparatory to the International Year of the Family. A discussion paper on the situation of the family in the region, a compendium of government replies to the survey on the family and a book on the changes that have affected families in the region over the past three decades were submitted to the meeting.

149. The main characteristics of recent social trends in the region, employment trends, an evaluation of the ways in which risk factors operate under conditions of poverty, the impact of those factors on youth, and the effect of family organization on children's educational performance were described in the publication Panorama social de América Latina.

150. Activities related to the integration of women into development focused especially on preparations for the regional conference on this subject, to be held in 1994, and on the drafting of the regional programme of action for the women of Latin America and the Caribbean, to be considered at the conference. At the same time, various studies were prepared and published, numerous intergovernmental, inter-agency and expert meetings were held and technical cooperation activities were carried out.

151. In relation to the regional statistical information system, work continued on setting up the Short-term Indicators Database, which has been of special interest to the Commission's member Governments. A technical meeting of the United Nations Working Group on the Implementation of the System of National Accounts, Rev. 4 (1993, SNA) was held at Santiago, Chile, from 26 to 30 July 1993. A regional seminar on the same topic, attended by 45 experts from 22 member countries of ECLAC and 10 representatives of six international agencies, was held at Santiago from 22 to 26 November 1993; the main objective of the seminar was to discuss some basic methodological issues and define the stages of the application of the 1993 SNA.

152. In the field of economic projections, future prospects for the region's economic and social development were studied. The analysis focused on the external factors that influence the evolution of Latin America and the Caribbean and on updating medium- and long-term socio-economic projections for the countries of the region.

153. A seminar on multimodal transport in Latin America, organized jointly with the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), was held at Montevideo from 21 to 23 June 1993.

154. The ECLAC subregional headquarters in Mexico continued to support consolidation of the process of economic integration among the Central American countries and the efforts of their Governments to revive and modernize their economies through the formulation of new approaches to development in the subregion, with special emphasis on changing production patterns with greater social equity.

155. In view of the primary interest of the subregion's Governments in economic relations between Mexico and Central America, seminars were held on the implications of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) for Central America.

156. In the field of social development, priority was given to the study of women's incorporation into the process of changing production patterns, particularly in Mexico, and to research on the health situation and health policies in Central America.

157. Support for the electrical integration of the Central American countries was a top priority during this period. The supply of hydrocarbons for electricity generation and the possibility of privatizing some services in the electricity subsector and of standardizing specifications for petroleum by-products were also examined.

158. During 1993, the subregional headquarters for the Caribbean continued to support the activities of the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST) by serving as its interim secretariat. The secretariat continued to provide information on science and technology through the publication of the CCST quarterly newsletter.

159. As to population and development, the first meeting of the Caribbean Working Group on Population and Development was convened. At that meeting, the framework for a Caribbean plan of action was adopted as an input for the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development, which is being prepared for the International Conference.

160. The subregional headquarters worked with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the United Nations Development Programme in organizing a regional technical meeting for the Atlantic, the Caribbean and the Mediterranean, in preparation for the 1994 Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

161. To increase the flow of information on trade and related activities, the subregional headquarters has been publishing a quarterly bulletin entitled External Sector Briefing Notes. The quarterly newsletter Focus also provides current information on economic development.

162. In the area of economic integration, a Conference on Trade Liberalization in the Western Hemisphere was held, at which the participants discussed such topics as hemispheric integration, subregional agreements, models of the economic impact of liberalization and, lastly, the policies that should be implemented during the transition to a hemispheric free trade area.

D. Economic Commission for Africa

163. During the period under review, 7 May 1993 to 5 May 1994, the activities of ECA focused mainly on the achievement of sustainable economic growth and development. Thus, the theme of the twenty-ninth session of the Commission and the 20th meeting of the Conference of Ministers responsible for economic and

social development and planning, which took place at Addis Ababa from 2 to 5 May 1994, was "Building critical capacities in Africa for accelerated growth and sustainable development".

164. In the field of industrial development, the focus was on research studies that would assist member countries to formulate appropriate industrial policies and to implement more effectively industrial programmes that would bring about the revitalization and restructuring of the industrial sector and the promotion of industrial programmes and projects by supporting national and multinational resource-based core industries. In the context of the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa, emphasis was put on the mobilization of financial resources for industrial investment and development of critical capabilities for industrialization in Africa.

165. In the field of population, the work programme of the Commission continued to address population issues, in line with the needs of member States, as expressed in the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action for African Population and Self-Reliant Development and on the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development. Emphasis continued to be given to assisting member States with the integration of population factors in their development planning, as well as to studies in the areas of population dynamics, family planning, HIV/AIDS and other pandemic diseases and their interrelationships with sustainable development.

166. In the area of international trade and development cooperation, the ECA secretariat undertook a number of activities focusing on trade development, finance and investment issues pursuant to the programme budget for 1992-1993 and 1994-1995. Activities included the servicing of conferences, international cooperation, advisory services, harmonization and liaison. The secretariat organized the twelfth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade, which took place at Tunis from 20 to 24 October 1993. The theme of that conference was "Fostering an enabling environment for Africa's trade into the twenty-first century: policies, strategies and resources".

167. The secretariat undertook activities in the field of intra-Africa trade aimed at assisting member States to design, adopt and implement policies and measures with a view to promoting and expanding intra-Africa trade, in particular in the aftermath of the signing of the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community.

168. The activities of the Commission under the statistical development subprogramme were designed to assist African countries to implement the Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa in the 1990s, as well as to support national programmes for continued collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of integrated demographic, economic and environmental statistics. Assistance was provided to some African countries in conducting needs assessment and strategy development exercises in order to identify current and future data needs of primary resources of statistics and to map out strategies to prioritize and satisfy those needs within available resources.

169. In the area of transport and communication development, the secretariat concentrated its efforts on carrying out programmed activities relating to

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international cooperation, parliamentary services, operational activities, ad hoc expert group meetings and coordination, harmonization and liaison activities with respect to the implementation of the programme of the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa. To that end, two reports were prepared on the Commission's contribution to the implementation of the North African Transport Committee's work programme and on the re-establishment of the Trans-African Highway Bureau. Another report was prepared by the secretariat for an intergovernmental meeting of African Port Experts and Senior Officials on the current status and steps taken to promote cooperation among African ports. Three newsletters on the Second Decade aimed at keeping member States abreast of the activities concerning the Decade were also produced.

170. As the information age has taken over most of the rest of the world, African member States still need to improve their information infrastructure to serve as support for development planning and management. To that end, the secretariat undertook a number of activities to assist African countries in overcoming their problems in this area. An advisory services mission was undertaken in May 1993 to the Pan-African Development Information System (PADIS) national participating centre at Dakar to improve the ongoing information system and services. Training in MINISIS bibliographic database management software was undertaken for the Ministry of Mines and Geological Surveys in Ethiopia in May/June 1993. The Ministry will serve as a resource centre in the sub-Saharan Africa region on the MINISIS database management software. A training course was also conducted for the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). Another training programme was conducted on information management methodologies and the use of micro-CDS/ISLS software in Algeria in June 1993.

171. In the area of natural resources, under parliamentary services, the secretariat convened (a) the fifth session of the Regional Conference on Mineral Resources Development and Utilization in Africa, the theme of which was "Mineral resources development and environment in Africa", in November 1993; (b) the second annual meeting of the Inter-Agency Group for Water in Africa (IGWA) in June 1993; (c) an ad hoc meeting for Senior Advisers on Policies and Strategies in Africa in May 1993; and (d) a regional leadership seminar on marine/ocean affairs in Africa, in March 1994. The objective of the first three meetings was to strengthen the cooperation and collaboration among member States in the concerned areas.

172. The secretariat also issued technical publications on mineral resource development policies in Africa, water resource activities (a periodic publication entitled Maji), remote sensing (a periodic publication entitled Annual Cartographic and Remote Sensing Bulletin), energy issues etc.

173. The activities of ECA were also aimed at economic cooperation and integration in Africa and, in particular, at making the process of economic integration in Africa more operational through, inter alia, strengthening the intergovernmental organizations in order to make them effective instruments for economic cooperation and integration in Africa. The secretariat assisted subregional economic groupings such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Economic Community (CEAO), in West Africa, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Central African

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Customs and Economic Union (UDEAC), and the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL) in Central Africa, the Preferential Trade Area of Eastern and Southern African States (PTA), and the Southern African Development Council (SADC), in Southern and Eastern Africa, in the coordination, harmonization and rationalization of their respective programmes.

174. In the field of women in development, ECA focused its activities on economic empowerment of women and the enhancement of their role in the development process. This was done through institution and capacity-building as well as strengthening of the database on women. Particular attention was also given to the participation of Africa in the 1995 World Conference on Women. In line with ECA Conference of Ministers resolution 736 (XXVII), which emphasized the importance of economic empowerment of women and their access to resources, the secretariat undertook activities aimed at building up and reinforcing the business and managerial capabilities of women; these include the launching of the African Federation of Women Entrepreneurs, at Accra in June 1993, undertaking a study for the establishment of an African Bank for Women and conducting training programmes.

175. In the area of public administration, human resources and social development, the secretariat undertook policy studies and action-oriented research on emerging issues such as restructuring of budgetary and taxation systems, entrepreneurial promotion and management development, manpower and employment planning, effective utilization of human resources in priority sectors for socio-economic development, relevant educational and training programmes, social policies targeted at youth, disabled persons and the elderly, and prevention of crime and juvenile delinquency. In order to foster popular participation in development as well as to promote ethics, accountability and good governance, a wide spectrum of activities were undertaken aimed at enhancing dialogue and cooperation between policy makers and non-governmental organizations and to identify measures needed to create a climate of trust and openness among them. Among the significant initiatives are the following: symposia entitled "From conflict to concord: regional cooperation in the Horn of Africa"; the African Common Position on Human and Social Development in Africa for the upcoming World Summit for Social Development; the meeting of the Global Non-Governmental Organization Forum entitled "Building sustainable societies: the role of non-governmental organizations in emergencies and social development"; and activities to promote the International Year of the Family.

176. In the area of food and agricultural development policy, planning and programming, a variety of outputs have been programmed for implementation. These may be classified into two categories: technical publications and a training workshop. One of the publications is a technical publication on the evaluation and monitoring of the impact of European economic integration on African agriculture. The publication discusses the diverse factors underlying the European single market, paying particular attention to such areas as exports of primary commodities, imports of agricultural inputs and relevant macroeconomic policies governing subsidies, prices, foreign exchange etc. A technical publication on appraisal, monitoring and evaluation of the impact of bio-technology on agricultural development was also issued.

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177. In the field of economic development and planning, the secretariat implemented the work programme relating to development issues and policies. The programme aims, inter alia, at improving national mechanisms for review and appraisal of socio-economic conditions, and appraisal of development policies and programmes, as well as devising methods for improving and upgrading planning machinery and building the appropriate capabilities in planning and economic modelling in order to assist African countries in the formulation of economic strategies and policies within consistent national development plans. In the area of the socio-economic surveys, activities included the preparation of the annual Survey (see summary of the survey of economic and social conditions in Africa (E/1994/54)) and the Economic Report on Africa.

E. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

178. Overall economic growth in the ESCWA region declined in 1993 compared to 1992 owing mainly to declines in oil prices and revenues, slow-down in growth of agricultural output and considerable declines in tourism revenues in some countries. Though progress was made in reducing the inflationary pressures in many ESCWA countries, the unemployment problem remained acute in most countries of the region owing to the slow-down in economic activities and the relatively high population growth rates. Reconstruction and implementation of structural adjustment policies continued to be the main themes of development in many countries of Western Asia during the past year. Some of the main activities undertaken by ESCWA in its endeavour to promote regional cooperation in Western Asia during the reporting period are discussed below.

179. Under the sustainable economic development subprogramme, several studies and reports were undertaken, addressing different aspects of regional cooperation, with emphasis on the major macroeconomic developments in the region's economy, including the annual Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region; in-depth analysis of economic and social implications of economic reform and structural adjustment policies in Western Asia; a study outlining a conceptual and methodological framework for poverty alleviation in the region; analytical reviews of developments and issues in the external trade and payments situation of countries of Western Asia, which also covered the main regional and international events in the area of international trade; and a study on export financing mechanisms in the region. In addition, the theme of prospects of economic cooperation in the region was addressed through a study entitled "Methods for strengthening mechanisms and techniques of activating interregional trade among the Commission's member States". Monetary and financial developments in the region were analysed and a study on management and organization of Governments in the ESCWA region was undertaken.

180. In the energy field, the main activities carried out by ESCWA centred around promoting regional energy strategies and policies; promoting the use of renewable and non-conventional energy technologies and conservation of energy through good management. Activities related to the introduction of biogas technology in the region were continued with emphasis on training nationals of member States in design, construction, operation and maintenance of family-size plants. Studies undertaken included the survey and assessment of energy-related activities in the region; optimization of energy use in oil refining and an

issue of the bulletin of current energy data, which provides comprehensive and updated statistics pertaining to energy in the ESCWA region.

181. In the field of water resources, the natural resources subprogramme addressed water resources management and conservation; promoting regional cooperation in water resources development; and the establishment of an ESCWA water resources database. Studies undertaken include a survey of water resources activities in the ESCWA region; a study on water resources planning, management, and use and conservation in the ESCWA region and a study on the operation and maintenance of dams in selected member countries. An expert group meeting was held to formulate plans and policies, including the development of national master plans for water resources development, conservation and management aimed at the optimal use of available water resources. Promoting regional cooperation in water resources development assumed special significance under this subprogramme in terms of consultations and joint activities with a number of Arab, regional and United Nations organizations. Efforts in this direction resulted in three reports: on modalities of cooperation in development of shared water resources; on the establishment of a regional committee on natural resources; and on the progress achieved in the implementation of the Mar del Plata Action Plan. In addition, the possibility of establishing a regional training network in the area of water, and a regional water resources council, was studied.

182. With a view to promoting regional cooperation in the environment area, the environment subprogramme prepared a report on the progress made in the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development and future prospects in the ESCWA region; a national training workshop on environmental planning and management was conducted; a multidisciplinary study on urban planning and the environment in the ESCWA region was undertaken; and a database on environment was compiled and computerized as an initial phase in a continuing process.

183. In the domain of food and agriculture, ESCWA continued to disseminate information through the issuance of its annual publication Agriculture and Development in Western Asia. In the area of resource conservation, two national plans of action to combat desertification were completed and two desertification control projects were executed. The rehabilitation of the agricultural sector in Western Asia was the subject of several activities undertaken by the food and agriculture subprogramme. To assist member States in developing their institutional capacity-building, several studies, training workshops and seminars were undertaken in three main areas: agricultural marketing (food consumption and distribution), agricultural extension services and rural finance. Furthermore, rural development was addressed through two country studies on the assessment and evaluation of rural development policies and programmes, in preparation for a regional study and an ad hoc expert group meeting to be held on this issue.

184. In the context of monitoring and assessing progress achieved in the industrial sector in the ESCWA region, the industry subprogramme completed several reviews and analytical studies, including the "Review of recent developments of manufacturing activities and prospects in the ESCWA region". Special attention was accorded to the promotion of entrepreneurship and

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operation of enterprises under severe and fast-changing conditions. This resulted in the publication of a manual for a training workshop on how to start one's own business and a study on the promotion of industrial entrepreneurship in countries of Western Asia, as well as two ad hoc expert group meetings. In the context of efforts exerted to develop national and regional technological capabilities and modernize the industrial sector in the region, attempts were made to promote the diffusion of selected advanced technologies in the areas of micro-electronics, industrial automation and biotechnology-related industries. This included a study on interconnection technologies for electronic industries in the Arab countries and another on managing technological changes in electronic industries in the Arab countries. With regard to biotechnology-related industries, a training course on tissue culture techniques and applications in industry and agriculture was conducted and the Second Arab Conference on Perspectives of Modern Biotechnology was convened. To address industrial hazards to the environment, a regional survey of production and consumption of substances harmful to the ozone layer was undertaken.

185. In the field of science and technology, an ad hoc expert group meeting on new and advanced materials technology and development for ESCWA countries took place and a study on the implications of the new and advanced materials for development of ESCWA countries was undertaken. In the field of integration of science and technology into the planning process of selected ESCWA countries, an expert group meeting was held and a workshop on the integration of science and technology into the development planning and management process in the ESCWA region was conducted. In addition, the introduction of environmentally sound technologies received the attention of the Commission through an expert group meeting on prospects for the substitution of ozone-depleting substances in the ESCWA region.

186. The activities of the transport and communications subprogramme for strengthening regional cooperation and development in the field of transport focused on the following main areas: specific transport policy issues such as privatization, deregulation and subsidies; manpower development and training· transport management; multimodal transport; maritime transport; and the dissemination of information and data pertaining to the transport sector in Western Asia. In addition to the annual issue of the ESCWA Transport Bulletin, several studies and reports were completed.

187. As to regional cooperation, the statistics subprogramme efforts centred around the standardization and dissemination of reliable statistical data, mainly through recurrent regional publications covering various areas; the development of statistical databases; household surveys; and the Fourth Meeting of Heads of Central Statistical Organizations in the ESCWA Region. ESCWA organized a regional workshop on strategies for accelerating the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics and another workshop on selected topics related to household surveys.

188. The social development subprogramme continued to monitor social developments and trends in the region through the analysis of social statistics, with special emphasis on social integration and vulnerable groups. With a view to promoting regional cooperation, ESCWA undertook several regional studies pertaining to the social field, including studies on return migration and the

spatial distribution of population, and to instructors and trainers in technical education. The issue of unemployment was addressed through an ad hoc expert group meeting on unemployment in the ESCWA region; while another ad hoc expert group meeting concerned the subject of human development in the Arab world. The Arab Population Conference was jointly organized by ESCWA, the United Nations Population Fund and the League of Arab States in preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development, planned for September 1994. The Conference resulted in the adoption of the Amman Declaration on Population and Development, which summarizes population issues of utmost priority that should be addressed throughout the Arab world. Under the theme "affordable housing" two publications were undertaken: the proceedings of the symposium on low-cost housing in the Arab world was published; and a study on housing finance in the ESCWA region was prepared. In addition, an ad hoc expert group meeting on low-cost housing in the Arab region was conducted.

189. In the women and development subprogramme, the Commission completed several studies and conducted or substantially participated in three seminars/workshops aimed at improving the conditions of women in the region. Two of these seminars were related to preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women while the third was a regional seminar for business and professional women on Arab women and sustainable development. ESCWA continued to provide technical assistance for the development of women in Western Asia and has also undertaken various activities which will be used as inputs in the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Year of the Family, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the World Summit for Social Development.

190. In its endeavour to promote and strengthen regional cooperation, the technical cooperation subprogramme, through regional advisory services, continued to assist member States in strengthening national and regional institutions in the following areas: data processing, energy, environment, human resources development, industrial development, national accounts and economic statistics, development planning, science and technology, transport and communications, and water resources development.

191. During the period under review, ESCWA further intensified its cooperation and coordination of activities with other regional and international organizations and Arab institutions in the region with a view to avoiding duplication of work and ensuring the optimum use of limited resources.

III. MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

192. The present section of the report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 1823 (XVII) and Economic and Social Council, resolution 1817 (LV), by which the Secretary-General was requested to submit to the Council, at its substantive sessions, annual reports on the meetings of the executive secretaries of the regional commissions.

193. The executive secretaries met at Geneva on 9 July 1993, in conjunction with the substantive session of 1993 of the Economic and Social Council, and in New York on 24-25 February 1994. The Secretary-General acted as Chairman during

some of the meetings, including those dealing with coordination between headquarters and the regions and decentralization. Other meetings were chaired by the Executive Secretary of ECA and by the Executive Secretary of ESCWA, in their capacity of coordinator of the executive secretaries at the time of the meetings. The main issues discussed at those meetings are set out below. However, as the second meeting was essentially a follow-up to the issues discussed at the first meeting, the conclusions outlined in the present report, unless otherwise stated, refer to the outcome of the second meeting in February 1994.

A. Coordination

194. The major theme of both meetings was the strengthening of coordination between the global entities of the United Nations in New York, as well as in Geneva and Nairobi, and the regional commissions - a crucial requirement in the follow-up to the restructuring exercise, the main underlying objective of which was to enhance the unity of purpose of the Organization and to achieve a greater integration of its economic and social activities.

195. Three sets of problems affecting coordination between the regional commissions and the global entities were identified:

(a) The first had to do with mind-sets and attitudes. A stronger commitment needed to be developed in all parts of the Organization to the concept of a unified United Nations. An integral part of that concept was the recognition of the regional commissions as the regional arms of a unified Organization and as full partners with global entities in the development and execution of a unified United Nations programme in the economic and social area;

(b) Secondly, clear lines of communications between Headquarters and the regional commissions needed to be maintained;

(c) Thirdly, the division of labour and responsibilities between global entities and the regional commissions needed to be better defined.

196. The Secretary-General noted that the change required would take time and sustained effort. While stressing the importance of acting simultaneously on each of the three sets of problems identified, he regarded enhanced communication as a key requirement. In that context, the Secretary-General indicated that he had entrusted to a Special Adviser in his Executive Office, among other functions, the task of overseeing relations and promoting closer interaction between Headquarters, in particular in the economic and social departments, and the regional commissions. The Secretary-General also informed the executive secretaries that he had decided to resume the practice of annual meetings of senior officials in the economic and social field, which he would chair personally with the support of his Special Adviser. These measures were welcomed by the executive secretaries. Finally, the Secretary-General pointed to the establishment of UNESIS as an important first step to introduce an improved division of labour between Headquarters units and regional commissions in the collection of data and policy analysis (see, in this connection, para. 225 below).

197. The executive secretaries also welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to enhance coordination at the regional level and seek the cooperation of the specialized agencies to ensure that the regional commissions could fully play their role as catalysts for more coherent system-wide regional strategies. He invited the executive secretaries to institute systematic inter-agency consultations, which could take the form of annual meetings to review overall trends, and exchange information on the programmes and initiatives of the various organizations, to be followed during the year by consultations, as necessary, on specific activities that can benefit from greater inter-agency cooperation.

B. Decentralization

198. The meetings reviewed the progress made during the past year in respect of decentralization in accordance with the policy lines set out in the statement of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on 2 November 1992. In that statement, the Secretary-General had highlighted the special importance he attached to decentralization to the national and regional levels, as a means of bringing the United Nations closer to the Member States it serves, and he had stressed that measures aimed at strengthening the functions of the regional commissions and increasing their responsibilities was an integral part of his restructuring objectives. Subsequently, the General Assembly, in paragraph 5 of its resolution 47/212 B, noted the indication by the Secretary-General that the further restructuring of the Secretariat in the economic and social sectors would entail the decentralization of activities to the field and to the regional commissions, and stressed that his proposal relating to decentralization to the field should be in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/199 and those proposals relating to decentralization to the regional commissions in accordance with the criteria agreed by the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council within their respective mandates, and be based on clearly identified relative advantages.

199. Decentralization is an opportunity to ensure that the Secretariat is organizationally and functionally structured to maximize the effectiveness of its support to developing countries. It should focus on opportunities for real improvement in the impact of its programmes, and not on gains or losses on the part of any particular Secretariat entity.

200. It follows from this proposition that, first, the regional commissions should be viewed as the regional arms of a single integrated United Nations programme in the socio-economic field rather than as disparate, separate entities; secondly, their participation in and contribution towards the global work of Headquarters entities should be enhanced and the mechanisms for programmatic interaction strengthened; and thirdly, each commission must have its own field of activities, and by implication its own responsibilities and corresponding resources.

201. In the light of these approaches, three basic operational guidelines are guiding the decentralization effort. First, service delivery should be managed as closely as possible to the recipient countries. By virtue of their being located in the midst, and in effect being reflections of the political will of

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the developing countries, the regional commissions are in an excellent position to know and appreciate the development imperatives and needs of those countries, and thus deliver services in the most cost-effective way possible. In particular, the regional commissions have clear comparative advantages in such areas as information gathering, monitoring economic development and promoting cooperation with and among their member Governments, including the provision of technical cooperation and training facilities. These comparative advantages arise, inter alia, from their proximity to member Governments, their consequent ability to appreciate changing or emerging requirements, their accumulated expertise and experience concerning the countries of the region (which is not available elsewhere in the Organization) and their ability to offer, by virtue of the involvement in their work of all countries of their respective regions, a comprehensive framework for regional cooperation.

202. Secondly, decentralization should be conceived in a holistic manner, bearing in mind the view of the Secretary-General of an integrated United Nations. The exercise should, therefore, take into account the roles of the various entities concerned and ensure that maximum use is made of their comparative advantages. It should also not result in fragmentation and loss of critical mass, in any single sector or in terms of the overall capacity to deliver multisectoral, integrated programmes. This means not only that there should be linkages and coordination of the work of the regional commissions with that of the central programmes, but also that the experience and unique characteristics of Headquarters, derived from its central position and global outreach, should contribute to the decentralization strategy. Through the services it has delivered to developing countries over a long period of time, the central Secretariat has built up a large store of global as well as region- and country-specific knowledge and experience. Moreover, because of its global reach, it is uniquely able to cross-refer, integrate and disseminate experience throughout the developing world, thereby maximizing the possibilities for developing countries to benefit from one another's experience. Similarly, deriving from its global policy-making function, it has an indispensable role to play in coordinating the global technical assistance work of the Secretariat, developing overall policies and approaches, and ensuring the maintenance of standards and consistency. At the operational level, it also has the role of providing expertise in specialized areas which, for reasons of cost-effectiveness, are not possessed by the regional commissions.

203. Thirdly, in order to achieve the desired results, decentralization of operational responsibilities from the central Secretariat to the regional commissions should be accompanied by changes in methods of work at both the regional and Headquarters levels. At the level of the commissions, decentralization should be accompanied by a closer integration of their work programmes into an Organization-wide framework (with suitable modifications to meet regional differences and requirements), and by increased cooperation and interaction at the technical level with expertise at Headquarters. As far as the central Secretariat is concerned, the process should likewise be accompanied by a shift in roles as well as focus. While continuing to execute projects, it should concentrate its services on specialized fields, for which demand in any one region is not strong enough to warrant the assignment of a full-time expert or which require a higher level of expertise which could be offered on an ongoing basis, and serve as a technical resource for the experts based in the

regions. In addition, it would assume primary responsibility for overall programme management and policy development, and assist the Secretary-General in the monitoring of activities, as part of an enhanced system of accountability.

204. The meeting then reviewed the progress in the implementation to date of the specific measure of decentralization agreed upon by the Secretary-General in May 1993 (see E/1993/85, paras. 190-193), in the light of the recommendations put forward by a high-level panel of experts convened by him and elaborated by an interdepartmental task force.

205. The executive secretaries emphasized the importance of ensuring full implementation of the specific decentralization measures decided upon by the Secretary-General in May 1993. It was noted that action had been taken with regard to the "regionalization" of advisory services financed by the regular budget. It was observed, however, that section 20 (Regular programme of technical cooperation) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 showed a somewhat lower ratio of distribution of resources for advisory services between the regional commissions and the global entities than envisaged. It was explained that 10 per cent of the total regional advisory resources had been allocated to new priority areas, including humanitarian affairs. Because of differences in the costs per adviser between Headquarters and the regions, decentralized resources corresponding to 20 adviser posts at Headquarters will allow for some 31 new advisory posts in the regional commissions.

206. With regard to the decentralization of activities and resources in the fields of natural resources and energy, the meeting was informed that it had not proved possible to finalize the relevant proposals in time to be included in the proposed programme budget for 1994-1995. Fifteen Professional and 23 General Service posts had therefore been "frozen" in the section of the proposed programme budget for 1994-1995 relating to the Department for Development Support and Management Services for possible redeployment at a later stage in the context of decentralization. While a limited number of posts had to remain at Headquarters for implementing global responsibilities in this field, the Secretary-General had now decided to propose the redeployment of nine professional posts and nine General Service posts to the regional commissions. The detailed distribution of posts would be reflected in a subsequent submission to the General Assembly before July 1994. While the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) would be assigned the global responsibility for water and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) the global responsibility for minerals, these programmes would be asked to undertake responsibilities within existing resources, so as to maximize the amount of resources to be decentralized to the regional commissions.

C. Relations with the United Nations Development Programme

207. The executive secretaries welcomed the opportunity to meet with the newly appointed Administrator of UNDP on 24 February 1994, thereby reviving an old tradition for the executive secretaries to meet with the Administrator annually.

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208. At the meeting, the executive secretaries presented the main areas of concern in their relations with UNDP:

(a) As the regional arms of the United Nations, they are gravely concerned about the dramatic reduction in resources allocated to regional and interregional indicative planning figures (IPFs) experienced in the past few years;

(b) There is a perception that UNDP continues to disregard the regional commissions as executing agencies in areas where they have a comparative advantage;

(c) There have been numerous instances of duplication of research and other activities at the regional level without involving the regional commissions;

(d) The involvement of the regional commissions in the programming cycle takes place at too late a stage to be meaningful;

(e) Some commissions have to deal with more than one UNDP regional bureau as a consequence of the different definition of regions by the different entities, which creates problems;

(f) A specific area of concern for ECE is the question of the location of the office for countries in transition.

209. The regional commissions welcomed the intention of the Administrator to operationalize the Human Development Report and to add a regional dimension in this endeavour. This idea had been discussed with UNDP in May 1993. However, the regional commissions would have welcomed it if the Administrator had also highlighted the regional dimension in his recently issued outline on the "new UNDP".

210. The Administrator took note of the observations and indicated that many of the points made by the executive secretaries, in particular the declining share of resources flowing to regional programmes, resulted from actions taken by the governing bodies. The Administrator welcomed closer collaboration between UNDP and the regional commissions within the existing framework, and to that end proposed the formation of a task force with participation from UNDP and all the commissions. The task force would identify areas and modalities for enhanced regional collaboration.

D. Programme and administrative matters

211. The executive secretaries discussed the progress of joint programmes, including interregional cooperation on EDIFACT, which was adopted by the Economic and Social Council in pursuance of resolution 1982/50. The problem of financing continues to be a stumbling block for the effective implementation of this project. Meanwhile, the executive secretaries discussed the implementation of Council decision 1994/204 of 3 February 1994, in which the Council selected, upon the recommendation of the executive secretaries, the question of regional

preparations for the World Summit for Social Development for in-depth discussion under the item on regional cooperation. In this context, it was decided to formulate practical proposals for interregional cooperation on the impact of international migration in countries of destination and countries of origin. Part IV of the present document reflects the joint proposals in this regard.

212. The executive secretaries also pursued their consideration of matters related to the Joint Units and discussed with representatives of the Department of Administration and Management questions concerning the delegation of authority on administrative matters and ways of expediting the handling at United Nations Headquarters of administrative and personnel matters relating to the regional commissions.

E. Training

213. The meeting was briefed by the Director of Personnel on the greater emphasis placed on training programmes. It was reported that the General Assembly had granted a large increase in non-language training funds and the regional commissions would soon be approached to define their training needs. As part of the Organization's effort to improve staff training, the regional commissions made a proposal concerning the rotation of staff at the senior level as well as at the working level, for short periods of time, for example three months. The participants were informed by the Director of the Budget that financing modalities for such short-term assignments for training could be found. Training should encompass such matters as drafting skills, modern management techniques, including project development and monitoring, and upgrading of substantive skills.

F. Preparations by the regional commissions for the International Conference on Population and Development

214. The Executive Director of UNFPA, who also is the Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development, briefed the meeting on the preparations for the Conference, which will be held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994. She observed that regional conferences and a number of other preparatory activities have been held in all regions and with the active participation of the regional commissions.

215. She assured the meeting that the draft Programme of Action of the Conference, including the proposed goals, were based on regional, subregional and other preparatory activities. For the formulation of the proposed goals, a task force had been established involving UNFPA, UNESCO, UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat, the World Bank and a number of non-governmental organizations. The Conference secretariat convened a number of informal meetings in New York, to which representatives of all Governments were invited in advance of the third and final Preparatory Committee for the Conference.

216. The executive secretaries briefed the meeting on the preparations for the Conference in each region. ECLAC had held a regional preparatory conference, which prepared a plan of action. It had worked through four intergovernmental levels. In March, the Committee of the Whole would look at the final platform of action. ESCAP, on the other hand, had organized in August 1992 the fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference at Bali, in close cooperation with UNFPA. The Bali Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development was adopted by the Conference. However, in order to obtain enduring and lasting results from the Bali Declaration, follow-up activities needed to be initiated as early as possible. Such follow-up activities may consist of national workshops as well as programme evaluation at the country level so that the targets set under the Bali Declaration could be achieved. Similarly, after Cairo, national workshops should be convened based on the outcome of the Conference. A reference was also made to ESCAP's Urbanization Conference, which, for the first time, was organized so that senior officials, research institutes, city administrators, the media and the non-governmental organizations met in separate rooms simultaneously and discussed the same agenda. Thereafter, they all sat together as the regional urban forum. The result worked: senior officials got to sit with non-governmental organizations and other actors and a jointly prepared document was submitted to Governments at the ministerial level. A similar format for the Conference might be considered.

217. The annual conference of ECE in April would ask the secretariat to follow, together with UNFPA, important immigration analysis and the impact of migration, the problem of ageing and the deterioration of eastern Europe. Resources would be needed. Eastern Europe and the newly independent States would also need technical assistance to get into the mainstream of international conferences. As to the Asian Republics, ESCAP would be involved. The model from Pakistan as a focal point was suggested for cooperation between the commissions and UNFPA.

218. ECA expressed appreciation for the cooperation with UNFPA in holding the population conference at Dakar in December 1992, at which a declaration on family and development was adopted. Both common position papers are to be submitted for 1994. The reference framework of the population for Africa sets many quantitative targets and will look at the implementation side. On 11 February, ECA discussed with the non-governmental organizations, Governments and the media, the preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development. The Executive Secretary of ECA indicated that he considered the World Summit for Social Development and Habitat II as different ways of looking at the question of population.

G. Regional preparations for the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women

219. The Under-Secretary-General of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development briefed the meeting on the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. He informed the meeting that the first Preparatory Committee session on the World Summit for Social Development in February had been successful. He reminded the meeting of the joint report from the regional commissions, presented by ECLAC. In answer to the question concerning the progress made so far, the following

points were made. First, the intergovernmental process, including the involvement of the secretariat, the bureau and the non-governmental organizations, was working well. The programme of action was in place. Documents had been prepared taking into consideration inputs from each country. The target was to have the programme of action issued by 1 June 1994, to encourage a public discussion, so that at the meeting in August there would be enough time for reflection by the public sector and the non-governmental organizations. This would help correct a certain lack of media coverage. The World Summit did not have a natural constituency, unlike the environmental constituency for the Earth Summit. The same situation also applied to the Women's Conference and to the Population Conference. A coalition has had to be put together.

220. Concerning the Women's Conference, there were some areas of overlap. There would be regional meetings between June and November 1994. The first one would take place at Jakarta in June. The meetings would offer some opportunities for consultations on the work being done for the Women's Conference, as well as what has to be done for the Social Summit. A second draft of a Platform of Action for the Women's Conference was nearly ready and would be discussed in early March during the session of the Commission on the Status of Women, meeting in New York. The regional commissions would be attending that meeting. It was observed that the agencies were putting considerable effort into their preparations for the Summit. He emphasized that it was necessary to work together on the matter in order to have not only a sectoral view but also so that the commissions could present a regional perspective. Their contributions would help to present a rounded view of the United Nations.

221. The Executive Secretary of ECA noted that the Ministerial Meeting on Social Development, held in Africa, had been well attended. The common position paper prepared by the Ministerial Meeting had been submitted to the Preparatory Committee session held in New York.

222. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC stated that ECLAC was not considering a regional preparatory meeting. The Social Summit would be one of the eight points considered by the Commission session in April. At the end of that session, ECLAC would issue a statement. He observed that the national constituencies for the Social Summit were different from those for the Women's Conference.

223. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP stated that, during 1994, ESCAP would organize two meetings - the Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development and the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference in Preparation for the World Summit for Social Development. The latter Conference was expected, inter alia, to review the implementation of the Social Development Strategy for the ESCAP Region Towards the Year 2000 and Beyond. With regard to the former, three major areas of concern had been identified, namely, women in economic development, women in social development and women and empowerment. Documents would be issued on each of these three areas for the Conference. In addition, separate documents would cover implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies as well as a draft plan of action for the advancement of the status of women in Asia and the Pacific. In the ESCAP region, several non-governmental organizations were active in the preparations for the two conferences.

H. Joint project with the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis

224. The Under-Secretary-General of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis briefed the meeting on the status of the joint project on the United Nations Economic and Social Information System (UNESIS), which had been set up in May 1993. The project was based on the collective data held by the commissions and was now quite advanced. A consultant had been chosen, and consultations would start soon at the regional level. Everyone seemed eager to cooperate and the Department was convinced that all could learn from what exists and benefit from a joint architecture.

225. The consultant elaborated on the progress made so far. Communications had been established with the chiefs of the statistics departments, all of whom had given valuable inputs. The focus had been first on the linkage of the Department with the regional commissions, looking at specific areas in which to improve quality, timeliness, availability of data and productivity. The consultancy was given to Rand for phase I through competitive bidding. Rand would visit the regional commissions and, in June 1994, a five-part report would be prepared which would be sent in draft form to the regional commissions for comments. The executive secretaries thanked the Under-Secretary-General for his contribution and expressed support for the joint project, which was regarded as mutually beneficial.

I. Commission on Sustainable Development

226. The executive secretaries raised a number of issues regarding the role of the regional commissions in the Commission on Sustainable Development. They emphasized the importance of the full involvement of the regional commissions in the work of the Commission. During the first meeting of the Commission, the regional commissions had been marginalized. The executive secretaries believed that the perspective of the regional aggregate for the system would be an important contribution. Also, the regional commissions attached a great deal of importance to the implementation of Agenda 21, to be reflected in the Commission.

227. The Under-Secretary-General of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development informed the meeting that the Commission was an intergovernmental body and open to the entire United Nations system. He agreed that the role of regional implementation should be highlighted and was of the view that the joint report of the regional commissions, to be submitted to the next meeting, would aid that process by indicating what needed to be done at the regional level. For example, ECE had considerable experience and pioneered a platform of environmental governance. He would encourage the regional commissions to bring their regional perspective to the work of the Commission. Beyond technical considerations, he noted, the Commission was acquiring a political dimension.

J. Fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

228. The Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser of the Secretary-General briefed the meeting on the work in progress for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. She reiterated the statement made by the Secretary-General that the regional commissions should act as focal points in their respective regions.

K. Other matters

Date and venue of the next meeting of executive secretaries

229. The executive secretaries agreed that their next meeting would be held in conjunction with the forthcoming substantive session of the Economic and Social Council.

IV. INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN COUNTRIES OF DESTINATION AND COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

A. Background

230. The main flows, issues, causes and consequences of contemporary international migration are intricately intertwined with important economic, political and social developments of our time. This by no means implies simple and direct correlations. To the contrary, the relationships are frequently quite complex and not well documented and/or understood. As a matter of fact, the registration of migration flows itself is a difficult task and, therefore, they are often only estimated rather than statistically well documented.

231. In the 1990s, issues related to international migration are increasingly perceived as a critical component of national and international conditions by many Governments and international institutions. Poverty, political instability, violence and wars are prominent driving forces fuelling emigration in many countries. Apparently, the flows of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers have increased in the recent past and the impacts of these movements - negative, positive and neutral - on countries of destination and of origin are increasingly being felt.

232. In addition to North America and Australia, western Europe has become a significant destination for migrants from all over the world, including from central and eastern Europe. These flows include relatively large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. Also, certain countries in other continents have recently been receiving significant numbers of migrants, in particular the oil-rich countries of Western Asia.

233. Intraregional movements of population are strong and probably on the rise, although accurate data of the flows are lacking. Differential economic growth as well as political oppression and wars, often between the peoples of the same country, are the main reasons for significant flows of migrants and refugees within Asia, Africa and Latin America in recent years.

234. While the more developed countries of destination perceive the influx of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers as substantial, in the sending countries in terms of absolute numbers the outflow is less tangible; however, frequently it is felt as a drain on qualified labour. The issue of brain drain from developing countries should, however, be treated differently, not only from a quantitative point of view, but also from a qualitative standpoint. To give an example from the Arab world, it is estimated that about 8,000 Arab scholars leave their region annually to go to the industrialized countries. The social impact of international migration poses many issues, such as the social integration of migrants, particularly second-generation migrants, and rivalries among different nationalities of the former group. The destabilization of families in sending countries is another important social phenomenon. International and intracountry migration appears to be accelerating the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. On the other hand, for a number of countries (e.g., Bangladesh, the Philippines and Morocco), emigration has beneficial consequences, such as the easing of unemployment and a substantial flow of remittances which may be important not only for the families of the relatives abroad but at times represents a meaningful part of foreign exchange earnings for the economy as a whole.

235. The administrative infrastructure to deal with migrants and the defence of the rights of migrants leaves much to be desired in sending and receiving countries. Some Asian countries, notably the Philippines and Sri Lanka, have created specialized agencies for promoting desirable migration and processing migrants. Most sending countries, however, lack the necessary infrastructure to deal with emigration, notably the Republics of the former Soviet Union. Also, the living and working conditions of foreigners in countries of destination are frequently a matter of legitimate concern.

236. The influx from the "South" during the past three to four decades to many western and northern European countries has generated relatively large ethnic minorities of non-European and non-Christian origin in a short period of time. This has contributed, together with the economic crisis of the early 1990s, to the fact that western Governments and the general public have increasingly become less willing to continue to receive immigrants.

237. Relatively large communities of foreign workers reside in the oil-rich countries. For the most part, they comprise temporary workers who return to their country of origin after a year or two, and their opportunities for settling and integrating in the country where they work are limited.

238. By definition, most refugees are the consequence of severe political and/or ethnic repression and wars, between or within countries. The number of refugees world wide has more than doubled between 1980 and 1992, reaching more than 18 million. In Africa, which currently generates a substantial share of the world refugee population, refugee issues have become worse in recent years. In the 1990s, in Latin America and Asia (with the exception of Afghanistan), refugee issues are at least not deteriorating. However, a number of relatively poor countries throughout the world have had to cope with significant numbers of refugees who often compete with the local population for scarce resources and jobs, which might result in depressing local wages. They might also be the

cause of environmental degradation, for instance, by using trees and shrubs surrounding their camps for firewood.

239. An increasing proportion of females (domestics, clerical and sales workers, nurses and entertainers) constitute a part of international migration flows, particularly in and from Asia, but also elsewhere.

240. Governments have adopted a variety of policy approaches to deal with migration issues. When migration, usually labour migration, is perceived as beneficial (i.e., providing remittances, easing of unemployment, acquisition of needed labour), Governments tend to assist in its promotion. To diminish migration flows perceived as undesirable, various types of restrictive measures are applied, such as immigration quotas, intensive patrolling of borders to prevent illegal immigration and tightening of asylum procedures. Often, the elimination of root causes of migration are discussed, namely, the promotion of international trade and foreign investments; however, such policies are usually furthered primarily for other reasons and the curbing of migration might be one out of many considerations.

B. Present activities at the regional level

241. There is no question that in recent years the interest of Governments, international organizations, academic institutions and the general public in international migration has increased. This is reflected in the attention being given to and actual activities related to international migration by national and international institutions, which have resulted in a wealth of new knowledge. Nevertheless, available knowledge about the magnitudes and composition of migration streams, and the causes and consequences for countries of destination and countries of origin is inadequate and insufficient for informed policy-making. The remainder of the present section is by no means a complete inventory of the many activities that have recently contributed to new knowledge; however, it provides a reasonably general overview, in particular of the activities under way within the United Nations system.

242. Two international organizations are concerned with specific aspects of international migration - the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). In addition to its major concerns of providing appropriate services to refugees/migrants, UNHCR compiles reasonably good information on the numbers of refugees by country of origin and their current location. The overwhelming majority of IOM activities are also concerned with services for migrants. In 1993, it launched a research project entitled "Analysis of present and future emigration dynamics in developing countries: sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean".

243. The Population and Statistical Divisions of the United Nations Secretariat gather, analyse and publish data on international migration. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has been monitoring migration, mostly to its member countries, with the help of national correspondents in a "continuous reporting system on migration" (the so-called SOPEMI system).

244. In preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development, the regional commissions organized conferences in their respective regions during 1992 and 1993. Documents, papers and recommendations from these conferences dealt with issues of international migration in their respective regions and in relation to the other regions. In addition, one of the six expert group meetings in preparation for the Population Conference was on population distribution and migration.

245. The regional commissions, as well as other regional bodies and country institutions, have been involved in assessing the status and importance of international migration in their respective regions. Activities include:

(a) Data compilation and monitoring of migration flows;

(b) Research of relevant issues and subsequent reports;

(c) Preparation of periodic publications;

(d) Seminars and meetings;

(e) Intergovernmental policy coordination.

1. Data compilation and monitoring of migration flows

246. ECLAC provides technical assistance to individual countries on compiling data on international migration and maintains the "IMILA" programme, which utilizes censuses to compile overviews of foreign-born populations. ECE has implemented a "rapid information system" designed to collect data and information on flows of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, as well as on recent policy developments and major meetings.

2. Research of relevant issues and subsequent reports

247. In the South-East Asia and Pacific Region, an Asian Regional Programme on International Labour Migration (ILO/UNDP) was concluded. Under this project, which ended in early 1994, a research study on the impact of the Gulf crisis on South Asian countries, remittances and development, and migration pressure was conducted.

248. ECE has a UNFPA-funded project on international migration in the region during the period 1992-1995. This includes a comprehensive multi-country effort on the mechanisms, determinants and consequences of international migration, focusing on central and eastern Europe, which is based on in-depth surveys. Other parts of the ECE project include: studies on international migration in 11 central and eastern European countries; a comparative study of international migration policies in the ECE region; studies by national experts on irregular transit migration through central Europe to the west.

249. Within the context of the sizeable numbers of refugees in the African region, the consequences of which have been significant on the poor host

countries, ECA prepared a study in 1991 entitled "Guidelines on the methods of evaluating the socio-economic and demographic consequences of refugees in African countries".

250. ESCWA has also prepared a study, entitled "Return migration profiles, impact and absorption in home countries".

3. Preparation of periodic publications

251. In the ESCAP region, the Scalabrini Migration Centre in the Philippines publishes the Asian Migrant, a magazine of current migration issues. The Centre also publishes a professional journal, the Asian and Pacific Migration Journal. ECE publishes the International Migration Bulletin, a semi-annual publication providing an up-to-date overview on flows of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, as well as important legislative changes and reports on major meetings. OECD publishes annual SOPEMI reports, Trends in International Migration.

4. Seminars and meetings

252. The regional commissions have been organizing seminars and meetings, essentially on the various issues mentioned above.

5. Intergovernmental policy coordination

253. Several bodies were created in the ECE region (none under the auspices of ECE) that dealt with coordinating policies of the western countries. Some were concerned primarily with South-North migration, others with East-West migration or with both South-North and East-West migration. These include the Inter-governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies in Europe, North America and Australia; the so-called Vienna Process (periodic meetings of senior government officials of European and North American Governments to deal with East-West migration); and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development. The European Union has mechanisms for continuous consultations and policy unification.

C. Proposed activities

254. In assisting Governments to design policies to deal with contemporary issues of international migration, the regional commissions can draw on a wealth of past substantive and organizational experience. The activities proposed below need not be conducted in all regions. Some will be primarily intraregional; however, if conducted in several regions, the comparison of results between regions can be mutually beneficial. Others will be comparative interregional studies by design.

255. Collaboration of the United Nations with other international organizations, in particular with UNHCR, the International Labour Organization (ILO), IOM, the World Bank and OECD, is indispensable.

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256. The following is a list of activities that the regional commissions may consider initiating as part of interregional cooperation:

(a) Each region may conduct a study on the main flows of international migration in and to the region, and provide an overview of stocks of foreigners and foreign-born populations. The focus would be on the most important flows, such as those from Africa to southern and western Europe and to the oil-rich countries;

(b) Each region may conduct a study of the main international migration policies of the principal countries of origin and principal countries of destination in the region. The focus would be on the prominent countries/policies of the region;

(c) Regions may select respective issues of major concern with respect to relations between countries of origin and countries of destination. Studies could be conducted within regions or by interregional collaboration on issues such as:

(i) The maximizing of benefits to both labour-importing and labour-exporting countries;

(ii) Relations between foreign direct investment, trade and labour migration;

(iii) The social impact of labour migration in sending and receiving countries;

(iv) The improvement of financial arrangements and material conditions (channels for remittances, pension rights, worker's compensation, insurance coverage);

(v) Manpower planning in sending and receiving countries;

(vi) Repatriation and resettlement programmes for refugees;

(d) Regions may select issues of major concern regarding the consequences of migration. These could include studies on topics such as:

(i) The consequences of loss of qualified manpower (brain drain);

(ii) The social, economic, political and environmental consequences of refugee movements;

(iii) The health impact of international migration flows.

(e) Regions may decide to conduct studies exploring the mechanisms, determinants and motivations of international migration by means of in-depth surveys at the family and individual level;

(f) Regional commissions may decide to start publishing periodic publications utilizing the accumulated experience of those institutions that are already doing so;

(g) Regional commissions will continue to conduct meetings, consultations and seminars on selected topics of major importance. Interregional meetings, consultations or seminars could be convened on issues of interest to some or all regional commissions;

(h) Intraregional or interregional policy coordinating groups or institutions could be established provided the need is well justified.

257. To guarantee effective interregional collaboration and coordination, while maintaining a great degree of decentralization, the proposed activities would have to be directed by one of the regional commissions. The coordinating institution, in consultation with all the regions, would be responsible for drawing up general plans and organizing meetings, seminars and consultations. One such meeting is needed as a start-up for the project and to set priorities for work. Other meetings would be appropriate to evaluate the results of the work and to exchange experiences.

V. CONCLUSIONS OF THE REVIEW OF RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 38 OF AGENDA 21 AND PLANS TO IMPLEMENT AGENDA 21

258. Regional activities identified by Agenda 21 33/ can be best addressed by the United Nations system through the regional commissions. Given the fact that the regional commissions are decentralized bodies of the United Nations system with multidisciplinary and intersectoral characteristics and are mandated to foster regional economic development and cooperation, they are uniquely qualified to be involved in many of the specific issues addressed in Agenda 21 which concern sustainable development.

259. The cross-sectoral structure of the regional commissions offers Governments an effective mechanism for responding to the challenge of both environment and development issues and problems faced at the regional level. Each regional commission encompasses a group of countries with a marked diversity as to level of economic development, endowment of natural resources, and social and political systems. They are, therefore, in a position to adapt universal precepts to the peculiar circumstances of each region, subregion or country, supporting the activities of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and acting as a screening tool to avoid duplication.

260. The regional commissions have been able to provide a wide range of technical assistance to countries on the implementation of Agenda 21, with the

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33/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

main focus on direct advisory services to Governments, research and analysis, capacity-building, training, and pooling of resources and information through meetings, publications and intercountry networks. More specifically, they have striven to:

(a) Promote discussion and comprehension of the relevant issues in the implementation of Agenda 21 at national, subregional and regional levels in order to advance plans and programmes and promote cooperation between countries and specialized agencies for follow-up on status of implementation;

(b) Provide assistance to countries and to specialized agencies in identifying priority areas, as it is neither advisable nor feasible to embark on all the listed actions of Agenda 21 at the same time;

(c) Support the efforts of the UNDP capacity-building programmes for developing countries in order to enhance, through regional approaches, their efficiency in dealing with the need for technical and management skills in the implementation of Agenda 21 through education and training, public awareness, research and development, technology transfer and information exchange;

(d) Promote and strengthen interregional and regional cooperation among member Governments in several areas identified in Agenda 21 for sustainable development and in the rational use and management of natural resources through networking of institutions;

(e) Identify country-specific and regional sustainable development problems and the development of policies, strategies and guidelines for promoting environmentally sound and sustainable development, according to country and regional priorities;

(f) Develop capabilities and skills for periodic review of environment and development conditions and trends through national and regional studies on the state of the art of international trade and sustainable development;

(g) In conjunction with UNEP, develop area-specific environmental management plans for ecologically sensitive areas and promote their implementation;

(h) Promote access and transfer of environmentally sound technologies relevant to the development of each country, emphasizing coordination with capacity-building programmes carried out by UNDP;

(i) Involve non-governmental organizations and other major groups in the implementation of activities related to Agenda 21.

261. Considering that most of these issues are of a cross-sectoral nature, a multidisciplinary and regional approach has become increasingly important. With that in mind, the Governments of the regions have entrusted the multidisciplinary programmes of work of the regional commissions with a wide variety of high priority sustainable development issues, such as poverty alleviation, promotion of sustainable trade regimes, control of adverse socio-economic effects of the debt crisis, promotion of science and technology

for development, sustainable development of human settlements, environmental protection and sustainable management of natural resources. In this context, the strengthening of the role of the regional commissions within the United Nations system must be viewed in terms of their expanded responsibilities, mandated through Agenda 21, in tackling the objectives and targets of such an agenda.

262. In order to ensure United Nations efforts for the improvement of efficiency and rationalization of its system at the global level, and to integrate development and environmental issues according to the changing needs and concerns of member States, greater regionalization and subregionalization of the United Nations system through its regional commissions is vital. This is already in motion, resulting in internal technical and administrative changes within each regional commission and demanding serious consideration in enhancing future budgets.

263. The magnitude of actions planned to be undertaken world wide on the basis of Agenda 21 cannot be absorbed by the existing organizations within the resources available to them.

264. As Agenda 21 includes 40 chapters, covering over 110 programme areas, the regional commissions will have to play a critical role in selected programme areas of section I of Agenda 21, whereas with respect to section II, the main emphasis will be on raising awareness, promoting regional and interregional cooperation, and supporting the UNDP capacity-building programme. In section III, the regional commissions will focus mostly on women, non-governmental organizations and local authorities. Regional commissions will also need to play other roles in training, promoting technology access systems and transfer, elaborating regional and subregional reports on the implications of environmental policies for international trade, inception and adaptation of legal instruments, and promoting institutional coordination within the United Nations system as well as with international organizations at the regional level, in line with section IV of Agenda 21.

265. In the light of the above, the role that the regional commissions might play in ensuring effective coordination, cooperation and delivery systems in a decentralized way is an important potential asset for a flexible global implementation of Agenda 21 because it will give stronger support to the actions of the Commission on Sustainable Development at the regional and country levels. In addition, the United Nations Secretariat, the Commission on Sustainable Development and member States will also be able to have more systematic and efficient reviews and appraisals of the implementation of Agenda 21 at the regional and subregional levels.

A. Economic Commission for Europe

266. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) marked a milestone in international cooperation. The recognition at the highest political level that environment and development are not incompatible but two sides of the same coin opens up new opportunities for environment and development policies.

267. In 1989, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) formally adopted sustainable development as a guiding principle for all its relevant activities, thus adding a new dimension to its all-embracing work programme. The Commission also set up an intergovernmental body of a cross-sectoral nature in 1990 to develop an integrated approach to environmental and economic issues and to promote regional and subregional capacity-building to that end (see Agenda 21, para. 38.29 (a)).

268. The cross-sectoral structure of ECE, covering such areas as transport, trade, energy, industry and technology, human settlements, agriculture and timber, offers member States an effective mechanism for responding to the challenges of environment and development issues, adapting universal precepts to the specific circumstances prevailing in the region, and promoting the integration of environmental concerns in regional and subregional development policies (see Agenda 21, para. 38.29 (b)).

269. The multilateral, legally binding, regulatory instruments on air pollution, water management, environmental impact assessment and industrial accidents negotiated under ECE auspices are part of an expanding regional legal framework to facilitate sustainable development (see Agenda 21, para. 38.29 (c)). Environmental impact assessment, in particular, is an effective tool for incorporating environmental considerations into economic decision-making.

270. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development prepared the ground for the further promotion of sustainable development within ECE. By using the outcome of UNCED, in particular Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration and the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests, the Commission is now in a better position to structure and channel its efforts at the regional level through a common frame agreed upon by all ECE member States and the international community at large.

271. Equally important was the impetus provided by all ECE member States at the 1993 Environment for Europe Conference (Lucerne, Switzerland). In their Declaration, Ministers stressed their willingness to cooperate to promote sustainable development, and they entrusted ECE, assisted by the recently established Working Group of Senior Governmental Officials with the central coordination of the process called "Environment for Europe" and, in particular, the preparations for the next ministerial conference, tentatively scheduled to be held in Sofia, Bulgaria, in 1995. This process is built around a strategy consisting of an environmental action plan for central and eastern Europe, a report on the state of the environment in Europe and an environmental programme for Europe. A number of international organizations and institutions are actively involved in these preparations - in particular, the European Union, World Health Organization, World Bank, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Council of Europe and relevant non-governmental organizations active in the ECE region.

272. In the light of recent dramatic changes in Europe, ECE is playing an increasingly important role in providing assistance to countries in transition from centrally planned to market economies, with particular emphasis on building and strengthening their national capacities regarding sustainable development,

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reviewing their performance in meeting domestic environmental policy objectives and relevant international commitments, and strengthening their environmental management and planning capabilities. Since 1990 the number of ECE member States has steadily increased from 34 to 54. Provided that the necessary budgetary resources are given to ECE, an assistance programme will be set up to provide advisory services, technical cooperation and training to help build up the human resources and institutional capacity required by countries in the ECE region, in particular those in transition, to implement sustainable development.

273. The ECE Committee on Environmental Policy examined modalities for development and gradual extension, in cooperation with OECD, of the OECD Country Environmental Performance Review Programme to central and eastern Europe and decided to undertake a pilot ECE review of Estonia, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, and to consider further issues of the ECE review programme in autumn 1994. This past year guidelines on integrated environmental management in countries in transition were finalized on the basis of the results of a series of workshops organized under the ECE/UNEP activity on strengthening environmental management capability in eastern and central European countries (see Agenda 21, para. 38.31). The Committee also adopted soft-law texts in the form of recommendations to ECE Governments in the fields of environmentally sound technology and products, environmental product profiles, and financing of environmental policies.

274. The ECE Action Plan to implement Agenda 21 was submitted to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its second session in May 1994, pursuant to ECE decision F (48) and with the general approval of the Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems. It outlines actions on the major regional issues related to the promotion of sustainable development. The Action Plan also illustrates the progress made by each of the ECE principal subsidiary bodies in setting up specific programmes or adapting existing ones in order to apply sustainable development as a guiding principle in accordance with ECE decision E (46). The ECE Committee on Environmental Policy (the former Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems) took note of the information regarding the resource implications of the ECE Action Plan and decided to prepare recommendations for the Commission on the appropriate action regarding the ECE activities in the field of environment and sustainable development.

275. Pursuant to the relevant provisions of Agenda 21, the Economic Commission for Europe decided that a regional conference on transport and environment would be convened in 1996 under the Commission's auspices and agreed to establish a preparatory committee. The outcome of the Conference should be a regional programme of action of harmonized measures aimed at the improvement of the environmental performance of transport.

B. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

276. As noted in chapter 38 of Agenda 21, the regional commissions, within their respective mandates, can promote capacity-building, integration of environmental concerns in regional and subregional development policies and cooperation regarding transboundary issues related to sustainable development. It is also envisaged that the regional commissions, as appropriate, should play a leading

role in coordinating activities by sectoral and other United Nations bodies and assist countries in achieving sustainable development at the regional and subregional levels. Furthermore, in cooperation with UNEP and UNDP, the regional commissions have a crucial role to play in building and strengthening the national capacity of member States.

277. Towards the implementation of Agenda 21 and in support of General Assembly resolution 47/191, at its forty-ninth session ESCAP adopted resolution 49/7, entitled "Implementation of decisions of the General Assembly on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, including Agenda 21, in Asia and the Pacific", in which the Commission requested the General Assembly to reinforce the technical capability of the ESCAP secretariat to enable it to play a leading role within the United Nations system in coordinating regional and subregional activities for the implementation of Agenda 21. The Commission also requested the Executive Secretary of ESCAP to ascertain the needs in the region for which ESCAP should be able to provide assistance and called for the convening of a ministerial-level conference on environment and development in 1995 to assess progress towards sustainable development and seek policy guidance from the member States in the implementation of Agenda 21. At the same session, the Commission also adopted resolution 49/5, entitled "Regional programme on space applications for development", in which it decided that a ministerial-level meeting on space applications for development in Asia and the Pacific would be held at Beijing in 1994. The purpose of the meeting would be to identify common problems and initiate projects, particularly in areas given priority in Agenda 21, in which space technology could make a significant contribution.

278. As regards the review of the implementation of Agenda 21, the ESCAP Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development decided on a schedule to review those sectoral and cross-sectoral clusters in such a way that, to the extent possible, the annual ESCAP report to the Commission on Sustainable Development would match the agenda items of the Commission on Sustainable Development in the subsequent year, i.e. the Committee would review cross-sectoral issues relating to critical elements of sustainability (chaps. 2-5 of Agenda 21), financial resources and mechanisms (chap. 33) and capacity-building (chaps. 16 and 34-37) on an annual basis and the remaining four sectoral chapters in the following sequence:

1994: Land, desertification, forests and biological diversity (areas of focus: land use, desertification, land degradation and mineral resources);

1995: Atmosphere, oceans and all kinds of seas (areas of focus: energy, atmospheric pollution and marine affairs);

1996: Health, human settlements and freshwater resources (areas of focus: human settlements and water resources);

Toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes (area of focus: waste management)

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279. Owing to budgetary constraints, one of the more efficient and effective ways to promote environmentally sound and sustainable development in the region is to ensure that the priority areas of Agenda 21 are adequately reflected in the programme of work of the secretariat. The programme of work for the biennium 1994-1995 addresses many of the areas in Agenda 21. This includes combating poverty; demographic dynamics and other population and environmental issues; sustainable energy and transport systems, including the promotion of energy efficiency; the integration of environmental issues into the policy-making and decision-making process; integrated land, water, coastal and marine resources management; sustainable agriculture, including sustainable sector strategies, balanced fertilization and integrated pest management; increasing environmental awareness, increasing the role of non-governmental organizations and women; technology transfer and institutional capacity-building; urban environment; trade and the environment; and environmental monitoring and the use of geographic information systems for sustainable development planning.

280. The Framework of Regional Action for Sustainable Development, endorsed by ESCAP at its forty-ninth session, is essentially intended to implement Agenda 21 and the Regional Strategy for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development adopted by the Commission prior to UNCED. The Framework would be further elaborated to identify programmes and projects and to assign priorities and establish a schedule of implementation.

281. ESCAP proposes to implement Agenda 21 through the incorporation of environmental considerations in the future activities of established networks, including the regional network of environmental and economic policy research institutes, the network on energy and environment, which includes representatives and officials from energy and environment agencies, the Regional Network of Research and Training Centres on Desertification Control in Asia and the Pacific, the media network of the Asia-Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists, the Regional Network of Local Authorities for Management of Human Settlements (CITYNET) and a regional working group on marine environment and oceanographic studies.

282. The Inter-agency Committee on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific has, since its establishment in July 1991, fostered interaction and coordination with other United Nations bodies and agencies, intergovernmental organizations, bilateral donors and other international organizations in the region. The Committee is preparing a coordinated plan of action for the implementation of Agenda 21, taking into consideration the programme of work for the biennium 1994-1995 of United Nations bodies and agencies, as well as similar programmes of intergovernmental and bilateral organizations. ESCAP coordinates the activities of the Inter-agency Task Force on Water for Asia and the Pacific, which is comprised of agencies involved in work on water resources. ESCAP also coordinates the Inter-agency Committee on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific to promote cooperation and joint activities on sustainable rural development.

283. Non-governmental organizations and other major groups provide valuable support to many programme areas of Agenda 21 at various levels. In the Asia and Pacific region, there are over 2,000 non-governmental organizations involved in

national and regional activities relating to sustainable development. At the regional level, many non-governmental organizations - for example, the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development - are actively involved in implementing Agenda 21 programmes. The Asia-Pacific People's Environment Network and national consumer unions could also assist countries in the implementation of Agenda 21. The essential prerequisite for such participation is an atmosphere in which the non-governmental organizations and the major groups can participate as partners in environmental policy decisions that can affect the communities in which they live and work.

284. ESCAP, jointly with the Asian Development Bank, conducted a study analysing the needs and options for a funding mechanism to meet those needs. The efforts towards full implementation of Agenda 21 will require additional funds for which the region is awaiting the outcome of the negotiations in the Commission on Sustainable Development.

C. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

285. In accordance with chapter 38 of Agenda 21, ECLAC should play a leading role in coordinating regional and subregional activities by sectoral and other United Nations bodies and should assist countries in achieving sustainable development.

286. ECLAC has sufficient intersectoral technical response capacity to support the countries of the region in defining and implementing integrated sustainable development strategies with regard both to their field of competence and to the holding of consultations and coordination with sectoral bodies of the United Nations system which are carrying out activities in the region.

287. Towards the implementation of Agenda 21 and in support of General Assembly resolution 47/191, ECLAC at its twenty-fifth session adopted resolution 544 (XXV), entitled "Activities on environment and development", in which it recommended that the ECLAC secretariat intensify its activities in support of the countries of the region in the following areas:

(a) Proposal of policies relating to international trade which take explicit account of the environmental dimension and contribute to significant increases in the value added to the raw materials exported by the region (chap. 2 of Agenda 21);

(b) Provision of assistance in the management of natural resources for sustainable development, intensifying especially the analysis of problems affecting small island developing States (chaps. 10, 11, 12, 13, 17 and 18 of Agenda 21);

(c) Promotion of the development of endogenous technologies and of the use and adaptation of technologies that will contribute to the sustainable and competitive development of the industrial and natural resources sectors, taking advantage of the region's resources in this area; promotion of the environmentally sound management of all types of wastes (industrial, household) through the use of new technologies (chaps. 7, 14, 19, 20, 21 and 30 of Agenda 21);

(d) Study and dissemination of information techniques for carrying out natural resource diagnostic studies and keeping inventories and accounts; promoting the creation of urban environmental indicators to monitor the sustainable management of the urban environment; and elaboration and dissemination of programmes of technical training in the management of economic and environmental information (chaps. 8 and 40 of Agenda 21);

(e) Elaboration, dissemination, analysis and use of economic instruments in environmental management and instruments for economic and environmental monitoring;

(f) Elaboration and implementation of political and economic strategies for protecting the region's biological diversity (chaps. 15 and 16 of Agenda 21);

(g) Technical assistance in the negotiations being conducted by the countries of the region in the forums on trade in and transport of toxic and hazardous wastes; establishment of mechanisms to monitor and prevent illegal traffic in hazardous wastes, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/226 of 22 December 1989;

(h) Initiation of the elaboration of a draft regional agreement which takes into account the recommendations formulated at the latest meeting of the contracting parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, held in Geneva from 21 to 25 March 1994, and proposal of modalities for the regulation of intraregional traffic and mechanisms for technical cooperation in this area.

288. In the report on ECLAC and Agenda 21, which was prepared by an interdivisionary team representing the main development areas dealt with by ECLAC, environmental considerations were taken into account within the regular programme of work for the biennium 1994-1995, with specific environmental studies being contingent on the availability of additional funding. The activities noted in the report are described below.

289. The Division of Economic Development will focus on the link between economic and environmental policies in the context of sustainable development. The environmental dimension will be included within the distributive aspects of economic development, fiscal policy and economic policy designed to achieve changes in production patterns. This means the incorporation of environmental sustainability into at least three planned non-recurrent publications dealing with the aforementioned issues during 1994-1997.

290. In the area of agriculture, the Division of Productive and Entrepreneurial Development will focus on the rationalization and sustainable development of the forestry sector, on the effects of rural-urban migration and on the new roles of the State and the private sector in providing incentives for sustainable agricultural practices.

291. In the area of industrial, scientific and technological development, emphasis will be placed on the relationships between human resources, technological infrastructure, environmental control and management, and international competitiveness; the environmental impact of industrial restructuring will also be assessed. Meetings will be organized to create awareness in Latin American industry of the potential economic and ecological benefits accruing from environmentally sound technologies. Through its Joint ECLAC/Centre on Transnational Corporations Unit a report will be prepared on appropriate technologies conducive to sustainable development and relevant policies.

292. The International Trade, Transport and Development Financing Division will study the effects of technological innovation and trade policies on Latin American exports. It will also undertake work on multilateral, regional and bilateral trade negotiations and on commodity exports, in all of which environmental factors will be given due consideration. The role of regulation and supervision of financial markets for channelling different forms of financial savings towards real investment, with the aim of achieving sustainable development in the region, will be analysed.

293. Placing emphasis on making better, more efficient use of existing transportation infrastructure rather than on new construction, the Transport Unit will work on the restructuring of institutional arrangements and transportation services, especially those required to improve the competitiveness of the region's exports. Environmental aspects of urban transport systems will be addressed as part of the overall improvement of the transport sector.

294. In the area of natural resources and energy, three basic areas will be dealt with: (i) natural resource management for development; (ii) sustainable natural resource development; and (iii) the economics of natural resources, specifically water, oceans, mining resources and energy. A shift towards more sustainable patterns of energy production and consumption will be encouraged as well.

295. The Division of Social Development will deal with the impacts of the Latin American economic crisis on social structures, social participation, integrated social policies, improvement of the well-being of indigenous groups, women and sustainability, as well as with methodologies for the improvement of policy design and implementation, and assessment of the management of social policies, programmes and projects in the region.

296. As to specific activities dealing with the environment, these will be undertaken by the Division of Environment and Human Settlements. They will include the training activities designed to meet the growing demands of countries of the region that need help in handling the instrumental and operational aspects of managing environmentally sustainable development; capacity-building for environmental management at the local level; and activities related to the implementation of Agenda 21 in the region.

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D. Economic Commission for Africa

297. Chapter 38 of Agenda 21 spells out the institutional arrangements for the implementation of Agenda 21. The regional commissions are called upon to play a key role both at the level of activities with member States and in coordination with other organizations within the United Nations system.

298. The institutional arrangements for the implementation of Agenda 21 in Africa are outlined in the African Strategies for the Implementation of Agenda 21 as adopted at the nineteenth session of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for economic and social development and planning in May 1993, as well as in the programme of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) as adopted at its fifth session in November 1993.

299. The work programme for 1994-1995 on environment and development in Africa was formulated within the framework of the subprogramme on poverty alleviation and is in line with the framework provided by the African Strategies and the new AMCEN policy orientation and programme focused on combating poverty.

300. Within this context, activities are focused on:

(a) International cooperation aimed at enhancing collaboration with subregional, regional and international institutions, particularly intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on issues related to poverty alleviation;

(b) Coordination with UNEP and OAU, including substantive servicing of the meeting of the Bureau and the Conference of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN);

301. Within the framework of the ECA work programme and activities in support of AMCEN, the support of the Commission on Sustainable Development is required in the area of capacity-building (within the context of Agenda 21) at the national, subregional and regional levels. This area includes:

(a) Environmental economics, accounting and management tools;

(b) Environmental law, institutions and policies;

(c) Environmental education and training.

302. Programme activities are being undertaken concurrently at the national, subregional and regional levels of development in order to alleviate poverty and minimize environmental degradation in Africa. The achievement of sustainable development in African countries would additionally depend on both the national and international communities' building on the initiatives already under way at these three levels:

(a) At the national level, African countries should establish and strengthen the institutions responsible for their environmental matters, undertake the measures necessary for capacity-building, inter-ministerial cooperation and integration of environmental concerns in the development planning process, and establish and strengthen non-governmental organizations, as well as youth/women's organizations, for conserving the environment;

(b) At the subregional level, the various intergovernmental organizations that have been established to coordinate environmental management should be fully utilized by African Governments. These include the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Inter-governmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Preferential Trade Area (PTA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Commission of Central African States (ESCAS), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC);

(c) At the regional level, the new strategy is to focus on the review, assessment and monitoring of major actions, policies and programmes affecting the state of the African environment. Supporting popular participation in decision-making and ensuring greater harmonization of the activities of the non-governmental organizations with government development policies. Priority attention is being accorded to the review of the performance of inter- and intra-African commitments or initiatives on the environment, particularly those relating to shared resources. Furthermore, particular attention is being given to the implementation of the key social and economic dimensions of environmental management, natural resources management, the role of major groups in environmental management and the means of implementing policies and programmes on the environment at the national, subregional and regional levels.

303. In general, therefore, six activity orientations are foreseen:

(a) Technical assistance to member States in the different subprogramme areas;

(b) Relevant advisory services;

(c) Mobilization of resources for activities in member States;

(d) Promoting information flow and exchange;

(e) Promoting environmental awareness;

(f) Coordination.

E. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

304. The Commission, in its resolution 165 (XV) of 18 May 1989, requested the Executive Secretary to take all environmental considerations into account in the implementation of the Commission's work programme, especially in the areas of agriculture, industry, transport, natural resources, energy, social development and human settlements. Furthermore, in resolution 180 (XVI) of 2 September 1992, the Commission stressed the need for the improvement of environmental management to achieve sustainable development as outlined in Agenda 21. It also endorsed the Arab Declaration on Environment and Development and Future Prospects adopted by the Arab Ministerial Conference on Environment

and Development. In addition, the Commission called for the establishment of an Arab and international inter-agency coordinating committee on environment and development for the Arab region that would bring together concerned agencies and bodies with the purpose of implementing Agenda 21.

305. ESCWA, in cooperation with and the endorsement of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment (CAMRE), established the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (Amman, April 1993). The Joint Committee includes all Arab countries represented by the League of Arab States (CAMRE), ESCWA, UNEP, FAO, UNDP, WHO, WMO and nine regional Arab organizations concerned with sustainable development.

306. Within the framework of the recommendations of the Joint Committee, the following projects for sustainable developments, as endorsed by CAMRE, have been identified as follow-up to UNCED and concern the implementation of Agenda 21 in the Arab region: combating desertification and increasing the green area (chap. 12 of Agenda 21); combating industrial pollution (chap. 30 of Agenda 21); environmental education, awareness and information (chap. 36 of Agenda 21); marine environment and coastal areas (chap. 17 of Agenda 21); development and rational use of water resources (chap. 18 of Agenda 21); sustainable development of nomadic areas (chaps. 12 and 26 of Agenda 21); human settlements (chap. 7 of Agenda 21); institutional development and support (chap. 37 of Agenda 21); environmental information network (chap. 40 of Agenda 21); human resources development (chaps. 34-36 of Agenda 21); conservation of biological diversity (chaps. 15 and 16 of Agenda 21); and development of environmentally sound technologies (chaps. 34 and 35 of Agenda 21).

307. For the biennium 1994-1995, ESCWA-programmed activities include:
(a) initiate networking efforts on an environmental information system for policy makers in the region; (b) preparation of technical reports for the ministerial-level Arab conference on rural and agricultural development (1995); (c) combating desertification and increasing the green areas in the Arab region; (d) development of environmental and sustainable development indicators for the Arab region; and (e) training on environmental impact assessment.
